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A New Voice

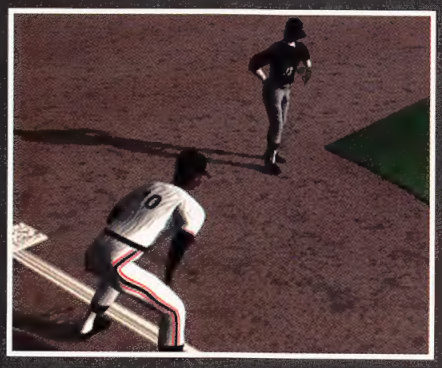
One video-game trade publication describes itself as the games Bible. Introducing the New Testament. ULTIMATE GAMER is aimed at you, the older, wiser, cooler game player. No more lame jokes, pathetic kidspeak or insane rumors. Just enjoyable, uncompromising, essential video and computer gaming facts.

The Latest Games

There are a lot of game magazines out there, and most of them touch upon the next generation of games and game machines, but only ULTIMATE GAMER gives you the lowdown on PlayStation, 3DO, Sega Saturn, PC and Ultra 64. With hot news straight from Japan and Europe—no vaporware, if it exists, we'll tell you first.

The Big Picture

ULTIMATE GAMER has one objective. To tell you everything there is to know about games, and to tell you first. We'll have stunning news, exclusive previews and the best reviews around. The clearest screenshots, the most useful tips and tricks and most of all, the widest scope. From Genesis to Ultra 64 to PC, we're there.



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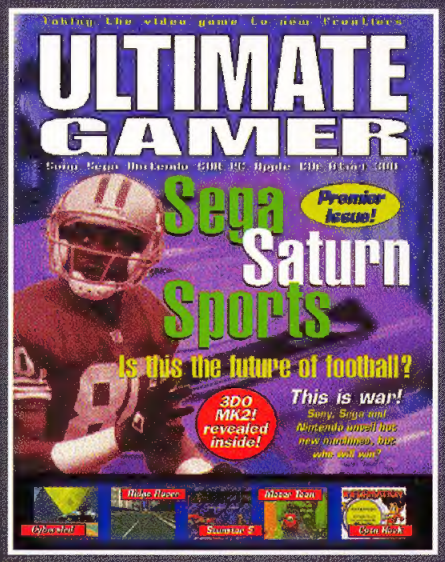
Truth and Justice

Games are expensive. We know that better than anybody, so before you spend your dough, you need to know. ULTIMATE GAMER has assembled the finest team of editors in gaming. We're going to play those games till our brains bleed, and we won't be pulling any punches. If a game is crap, allow us to point that out.

A New Age

Games have never looked so good. Cutting-edge technology and new ideas are pushing the frontiers of gaming every day. From Donkey Kong Country to Daytona USA, games will never look the same again. If you want to ride this wave and keep up with the pace of change, you need ULTIMATE GAMER. It's that simple.



Sample cover only

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INSIDE

News p10
Big news this month as we report on the latest Ultra 64 developments, some wicked-looking PlayStation games and a hotbed of breaking stories.

Static p16
Not even one issue old, and already you guys want to know what's coming up in future issues of ULTIMATE GAMER.

Sega Saturn Sports p20
Sports reporter Jeff Tschiltsch brings you a world exclusive look at Sega's upcoming Saturn Sports lineup, including **NHL All Star Hockey**, **Worldwide Soccer** and **Pebble Beach Golf Links**.

Sega Saturn p28
We take a look at the official US version of the Sega Saturn, checking out the new design and Sega's new plans.

PlayStation p32
Sony are about to unveil their new console. We bust it open and compare it with Saturn. Who comes out on top?

3DO M2 p34
3DO have a 64-bit accelerator up their sleeves. Chris Gore gets down and dirty to check it out.

Jaguar CD p38
Atari have the cheapest, blackest, sexiest CD drive on the market, but can they deliver?

Neo Geo CD p42
SNK's new machine will debut in Fall, but how does it shape up against the other consoles?

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Interview p62
CEO of Digital Pictures, tom Zito, gives us his views on FMV, games in general and the future of TV.

Tactical p90
Things are hotting up down at the local arcade. Find out why new technology is changing the arcade forever.

WIN!

Every issue, we'll give you the chance to win the greatest prizes on Earth. Next issue, we'll try to convince Cindy Crawford to contribute to this worthy cause, but this time, you could win:

A Sony PlayStation p31

A part in an interactive movie p97

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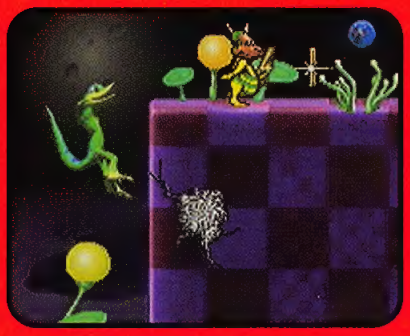

Reviews

The Ultimate Gamer review section is the freshest, simplest, most original review section yet, even if we say do so ourselves. Gone are lengthy, pointless descriptions of plot. Gone are the tiny, fuzzy, indecipherable screenshots. Instead, you get what you need. Glorious screenshots, fabulous images, vital information and a clean, honest scoring system. Our reviewers are the toughest, straight-shooting players in the business. Trust our scores. See the games as they really are. You'll also note that the games themselves are the pick of the bunch. No space is wasted. Games are expensive, so you need to know you're making the right decision. Hey, we're here to help!

Mortal Kombat 3 page 64
The coin-op you've been waiting for, but does it live up to the hype?

Slam N Jam page 68
Could this be better than **NBA Jam**? It certainly gets close.

Toh Shin Den page 70
The fighting game that rocked the world. Better than **Virtua Fighter**?

Ridge Racer page 72
Racing games have never looked this good. But will it last?

Cyber Sled page 74
Namco's second 32-bit outing may not be the thriller you'd expect.

Myst page 75
Surreal adventure gets an airing away from the home computer.

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Crystal Dynamics reptile hero goes haywire on 3DO.

Dark Forces page 78
Is this the best PC game ever? Check out our review to find out.

Raiden Project page 80
Fast-moving arcade perfect fun in the first good PlayStation shooter.

Kileak the Blood page 84
Doom meets **Mech Warrior** in this hot PlayStation adventure.

Chaos Control page 85
Is this the best CD-i game so far? Certainly it's the best-looking.

MICRO REVIEWS p86
Where the best and the worst of the rest get dealt with in exactly the way they deserve.

Spider-Man Animated • Genesis
Metal Warriors • SNES
Super RBI Baseball • SNES
Brutal • Genesis 32X
Lemmings • CD-i
Troy Aikman Football • Jaguar
Immercenary • 3DO
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Skeleton Krew • SNES
Shut Up and Jam 2 • Genesis
Deep Space Nine • SNES
Earthworm Jim • Game Boy
Twin Goddesses • PlayStation
Clockwork Knight • Saturn
Daedalus Encounter • PC CD-ROM

Plugged In

I love video games yet I can't stand any of the gaming magazines I read. The information is suspect, the reviews are heavily biased toward advertisers and frankly, they're all written for children. I've been playing games since I first got my hands on *Asteroids* at the arcade and then purchased my first home console system which was an Odyssey². From then on, I could never pass an arcade without stopping in to check out the latest games. Sure, I've been a gamer since I was a kid, but why are all the magazines that cover the genre skewed so young?

The reason I wanted to create ULTIMATE GAMER was to fill a gap that was evident at the newsstand—an intelligent magazine written for men who play computer and video games.

Sometimes it's very difficult to describe something that's so new. It will be a lot easier for me to tell you a few things that ULTIMATE GAMER is *not*. We're not a seriously pretentious magazine written for industry insiders and developers, focusing on games that won't be out for years. We won't hype the crap out of something and then dismiss it after it's released. Gossip is something you can read at the supermarket checkout line; game magazines don't need that kind of garbage. You can trust that the information you read here has been confirmed and verified by more than one source. Sure we're excited about the 64 and 128-bit hardware that's on the horizon—and we'll be happy to write about it—when it exists. Vaporware is fun to read about but if I want some really good science fiction, I'll watch *Star Trek*. We're interested in what can be played right now. I'm not embarrassed to admit that not only do I not completely understand the technical details of gaming hardware, I find them to be irrelevant. Technical specs are nice, but the truth is the game's the thing.

The focus of ULTIMATE GAMER will certainly be games, except that you won't read about cute crap like *Bubsy*. Fighting games will be an emphasis, sports games will most certainly dominate our pages, as well as action games like *Doom*. Our coverage of sports games will not be relegated to some token section to appease advertisers. I think you will find our exclusive coverage of the Sega Saturn Sports lineup compelling and intelligently reported. This is just a taste of what you can expect when it comes to covering sports titles.

The time for ULTIMATE GAMER is now. The Nintendo generation who grew up with the original NES in the eighties has matured and they want to read about new and exciting gaming experiences. My intention is that ULTIMATE GAMER will become your game magazine of choice—the one you trust when it comes to honest reviews, accurate news, helpful game tips, compelling journalism and exciting features. Stay with us, you'll be glad you did.

Chris Gore

—Chris Gore
Editor in Chief

The Future is Here Now...

NINTENDO DRAWS THE BATTLE LINES

Nintendo are being very weird at the moment. Their much-vaunted Ultra 64 console is still as much of a mystery as it ever was. Sega, Sony, Atari and the rest have all come clean about their next generation plans. Nintendo however, have decided to leak out tiny pieces of near-useless information about the machine.

One theme that does show up time and time again is exclusivity. All the titles being developed for Ultra 64 will only appear on that machine, at least that was Nintendo's original plan, but we already have it on good authority that exceptions will be made. **Mortal Kombat III** for example looks like turning up on every single major platform, from Genesis upwards.

So why all the mystery? Unkind critics suggest that Nintendo are having problems. Confidence is certainly a problem. Only a handful of developers have been announced, including Virgin, Acclaim and Midway, but several big software companies have decided to adopt a wait-and-see approach. Nobody wants to develop cartridge software anymore because it's just too damned expensive. Ultra 64 will be a cartridge machine, although Nintendo claim they have some revolutionary cart technology up their sleeve, bringing cost down and memory size up.

Although the machine still looks like being some way off, Nintendo have made some very firm commitments. At $250 or less, they promise it will be the cheapest of the new machines. Featuring Silicon Graphics' processing power, it will be the most powerful of the new machines, with only M2 from 3DO coming close. They have also promised that the arcade games already installed or on their way (**Cruis'n USA**, **Killer Instinct** and **Ultra Doom**) will be identical or maybe even superior on the home format.

At the moment, the arcade machines serve as a useful advertisement for the Ultra 64 console, with plugs before, after and during games. One slight drawback is that, technically, both **Cruis'n** and **Killer Instinct** look pretty weak compared to the likes of **Daytona** and **Virtua Fighter 2**. Nintendo have explained that the arcade hardware is substantially different though and will, if anything, be improved for the home launch.

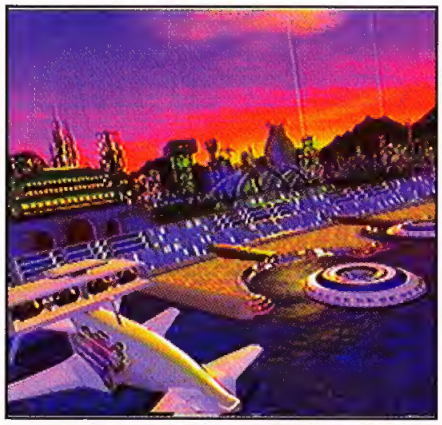
Bullshit Bonanza

Five plausible Ultra 64 rumors:

1. It will be a CD-based machine using CD ROM XA technology developed by Philips.
2. It will be uplinked to Nintendo's BAX satellite and operate like a cable box on a pay-per-play basis.
3. Carts will be abandoned soon in favor of a CD drive add-on, similar to Sega CD.
4. Few software companies will back the machine, fearing price-control and expensive manufacturing costs from Nintendo.
5. Nintendo have a secret compression technology allowing 100 Megs of information to be stored on a $60 cartridge.

Five ridiculous Ultra 64 rumors:

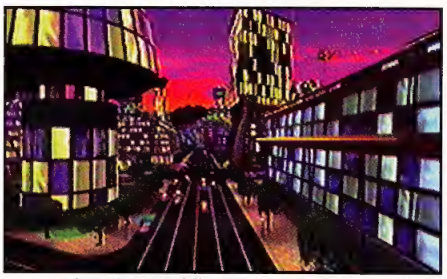
1. It actually exists.
2. It will be compatible with Virtual Boy.
3. It will be an add-on for the Super Nintendo.
4. It will debut in July.
5. The games will be cheap.



This scene was rendered on a Silicon Graphics Indy workstation.

Rendered 3-D imagery is all well and good, but U64 can do similar stuff in real time.

This frog, again produced on Indy, was used in a Peter Gabriel video.



Imagine an Ultra 64 version of Starfox...now wouldn't *that* be nice?

PLAYSTATION POWERS UP

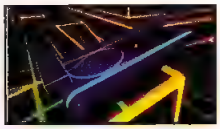
Driving game fans are about to get a really nice treat. Psygnosis, now owned by Sony Computer Entertainment, have been working on PlayStation software longer than almost any other company and the fruits of their labour look very appetising indeed. Psygnosis' have been famous in the past, not for gameplay (with the possible exception of Lemmings), but for their amazing skill in the realm of 3D rendered graphics. That investment has finall paid off. Now that Psygnosis can use the PlayStation hardware to perform these complicated functions in real time, their 3D expertise is shaping some very hot looking games.

Perhaps the most immediately impressive of their PlayStation titles is the awesome-looking Demolish 'Em Derby. This owes more than a doffed cap to Daytona USA, featuring the same radical saloon car racing action. Psygnosis promise that this will be even better than Daytona USA on Saturn, largely thanks to the PlayStation's superior 3D capabilities. Psygnosis spent a great deal of time working on the crash mechanics and when those cars collide with inanimate objects you can almost feel your teeth fly straight into your butt.

Also on the release list for late this year is a stunning alternative to old-timer F-Zero. It's called Wipeout and can best be described as a cross between Ridge Racer and Star Wars. You pilot a hovering, futuristic vehicle round some very fast, very dangerous courses. the game is very early at this stage, so gameplay details may vary wildly by the time the game launches.

Crazy Ivan is a far more conventional offering, kind of like Doom with Robots. There are a fair few strategic elements to worry about, but for the most part, you have to destroy things with a big gun. No complaints from this department.

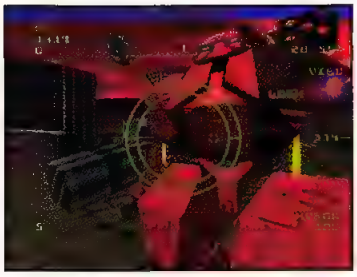
Finally, Psygnosis are very proud of a little title called provisionally, Assault Rigs. It looks like Tron, feels like Cybersled and plays like nothing else. Looks bizarre visually, but in a very cool, stylish way. All these games should show up before Christmas with any luck, but the one to hold your breath for is definitely Demolish 'Em Derby. We'll have more information next issue.



Assault Rigs is a Cybersled type game with more than a hint of Tron.

Crazy Ivan is just what it sounds like, a mad Russian Robot on the rampage.

Wipeout looks simply incredible. If you think the still shots look nice, you really have to see it move. This is F-Zero for the Nineties.



If anything, Crazy Ivan plays like Doom and looks like Battletech.

Demolish 'Em Derby is Psygnosis' answer to Daytona USA and we've seen it moving. It's better than you think.

OK, we admit it, we're besotted with Wipeout. It's so smooth.

Sega and Sony Go To War

In the early '80s, it was Atari 2600 vs. Intellivision. In the early '90s, Nintendo vs. Sega. In this fall of 1995, the next significant marketing battle seems ready to ignite, when the Sony PlayStation is released head-to-head with Sega's Saturn.

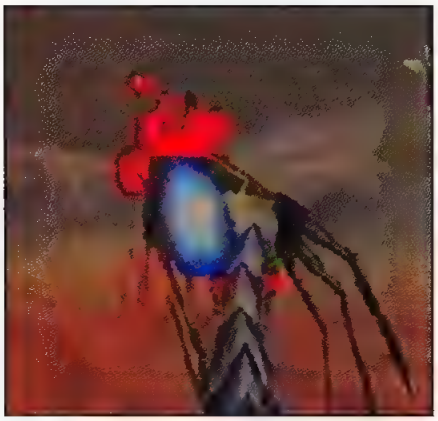
Both 32-bit CD systems have been available for the past six months in Japan. Both feature fully-rendered images and 3D graphics. And both Sony and Sega command a large enough advertising budget to hammer their system's image into the heads of every man, woman and child on the planet.

For the most part, the systems have been running neck-in-neck in Japan, although recent reports suggest the PlayStation is surfacing as the sales leader. As is common in Japanese-sold systems, neither the Saturn nor the PlayStation were sold with a pack-in game. But it's clear that owners of both systems have been partial to racing simulators: An amazing 99% or more of PlayStation owners purchased Ridge Racer for their system, and the most popular game among Saturn owners has been Daytona USA.

When the Saturn is released in the United States on September 2nd, it is expected to come packed with Virtua Fighter. Sony, who has set no firm fall release date for its PlayStation, may consider moving the date up to this summer, planning on beating Sega to the bell and probably including Ridge Racer with its system.

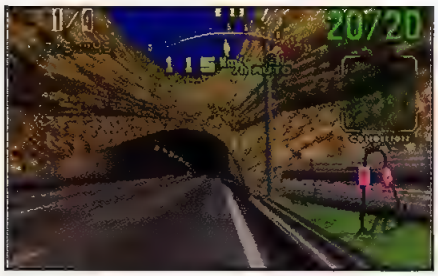
Sony and Sega have made it easy for outside companies to have access to licensing rights and programming specifics, ensuring that a steadily increasing base of games will be firmly in place when the systems make their American debut.

Notorious for making such game production difficult is Nintendo, whose proposed Ultra 64 system is also expected to be released in the next few months. The Ultra 64 will be cheaper and, in theory, significantly more powerful than either the PlayStation or the Saturn. However, the Ultra 64 has been largely shrouded in mystery, and has not yet been released and test-marketed in Japan. Whether Nintendo will rise up as a third serious competitor in this fall's Sega/Sony melee remains to be seen.

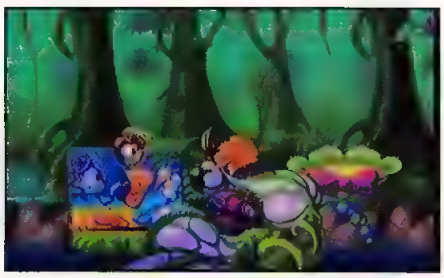


Panzer Dragoon shows some Saturn promise. It'll debut with the machine.

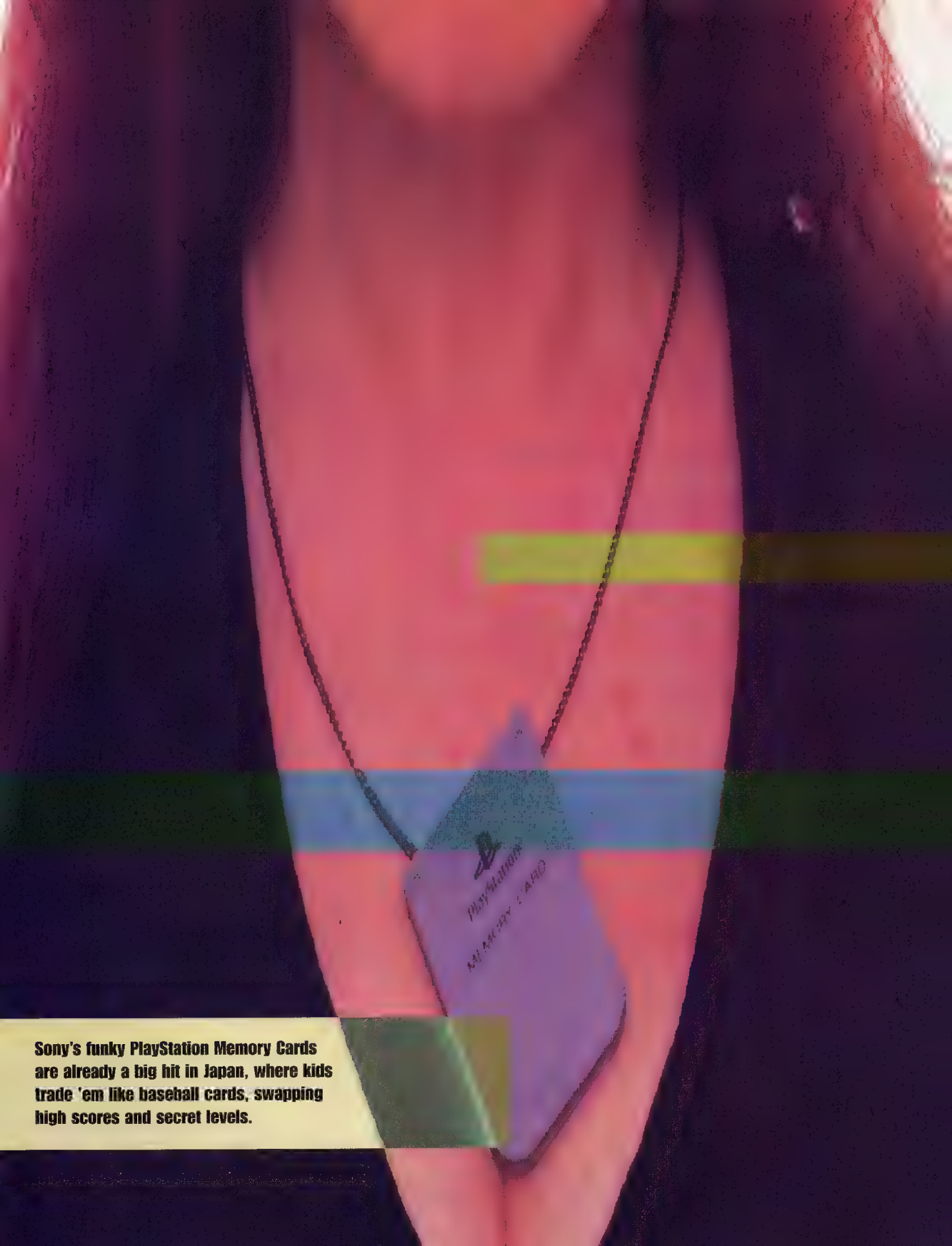
PlayStation's superior 3D capabilities may well give it an unexpected lead over Saturn, but Sony have an uphill struggle to gain acceptance from game consumers.



Racing games are considered by most to be the best benchmark for a machine's performance. The PlayStation seems to be that much smoother than Saturn in this respect.



Rayman is one many games that will appear on both PlayStation and Saturn.



Sony's funky PlayStation Memory Cards are already a big hit in Japan, where kids trade 'em like baseball cards, swapping high scores and secret levels.

INCOMING
BREAKING STORIES

GEX 2 ALREADY?

Crystal Dynamics wonderful 3DO game **Gex** has only just hit the shelves, yet already a sequel is in production. The programmers of **Gex** are hard at work finishing the Saturn and PlayStation versions, while preliminary design work starts on a follow up. The new game is expected to expand upon the themes presented in the first game, evolving the concept à la Super Mario brothers.

KILLER RUMOR

Killer Instinct, the game that launched a thousand combos, is proving to be a pretty big hit. Another thing that might prove a hit is a Super NES version of the game. It's easily possible, using the techniques featured in **Donkey Kong Country** and the gossip is that Nintendo will release a 16-bit version of the game in order to keep the Super NES market from a premature death. However, Nintendo have said repeatedly that they would only release Instinct on the Ultra 64 platform. Quite why they'd go back on a promise as firm as that is a mystery to us.

GENESIS BOY?

Some of the more eagle-eyed readers out there may remember that Sega had plans to release a portable version of the Genesis, featuring a full colour screen, and more importantly, better battery life than the Game Gear. So what happened? Well, it looks like Sega just gave up the ghost and abandoned the project. Why? Because the 16-bit market is so dead in the water, that it won't even support a brand new handheld machine. Sega took a real beating from Nintendo in the handheld war and is still smarting. The sad thing is that the Mega Gear, as it was codenamed, was finished, ready for production and accepted Genesis cartridges without any modifications. Makes you wonder how much game-related junk ends up in a warehouse somewhere in the desert.

WHERE THE HELL IS VIRTUAL BOY?

Nintendo's weirdness knows no bounds. The Virtual Boy was supposed to debut early this year and yet there's no sign of it. Technical problems? Health concerns? Or perhaps just nasty press coverage. not that we'd participate in that kind of thing....

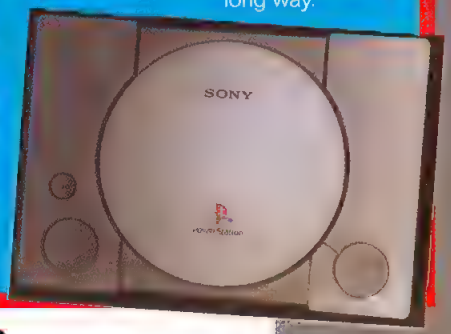
CAT CONTROL

Furious Jaguar owners can look forward to getting a decent controller at last. Atari are launching a 6-button pad for their machine, which should have had a decent pad in the first place. The pad has been specifically designed for fighting games, which is ironic since there isn't a single decent fighting game on the Jaguar. Still, you have to admire their sense of humor.

NAMCO SPORTS

Not content with having the best driving game on any system (**Ridge Racer**), Namco feels it has to get involved with sports titles. On the way are a Baseball game and a Soccer title, both of which should [illegible]

Namco's previous association with PlayStation now looks a little shaky. Plans are afoot to release many Namco titles on Sega Saturn format. More interestingly, Namco's PlayStation arcade system is beginning to bear fruit, with the recent arrival of **Tekken** and a new air combat simulator. It looks like those boys in Japan have come a long way.



ON THE WAY OUT...

SEGA CD

Many will not mourn the loss of what is widely thought to be one of the least exciting game platforms ever, at least in terms of little things like graphics and gameplay. (Hey, the sound was quite nice, though.) In order to make room on retail shelves for Sega Saturn games, the Sega CD is on its way out. All marketing support for the system was dropped after Christmas last year and Sega CD systems have since been collecting dust. The Sega Saturn will use the same packaging for its games as the Sega CD, which may cause confusion at software stores, sources within Sega admitted to ULTIMATE GAMER. (The packaging will be exactly the same, however, Saturn titles will have a white sleeve instead of the Sega CD's bright blue shade.) This comes at an odd time when excellent games are finally seeing release for Sega CD such as **Earthworm Jim**, **Eternal Champions: Challenge from the Darkside** and **Battlecorps**. Even though games for each system are both delivered via the now dominant silvery CD, there is no compatibility between either platform. Sega has no official plans to provide Sega Saturn owners with a way to play Sega CD software by way of a downwardly compatible add-on. Consumers confused about this incompatibility issue shouldn't be bothered by Sega CD titles come September 2nd because all of these old games should be in the discount bins for less than $9.99. What a bargain.

NEC'S "PC ENGINE 2" BOMBS BIG TIME IN JAPAN

NEC's recent Japanese launch of the PC FX CD console has been a resounding failure. Slow sales have been attributed to the rather odd technology, which, while great for interactive CD anime stuff, is pretty hopeless when it comes to action games. Saturn and PlayStation's launch didn't help either.

STATIC

Reach out and touch someone...

OK, so we get our say all the time, but we want to know what you guys are thinking. Opinions, objections, questions and answers. Send us your letters and the star letter each month wins the game of your choice on any system.

Static, ULTIMATE GAMER, 9171 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 300
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

Smoke and Mirrors?

Dear UG,
We get to hear an awful lot about Nintendo's so-called Ultra 64, but nobody's ever seen the machine. Also, Nintendo keep promising that Ultra 64 is going to be better than anything else in the market, but to be honest, I didn't really think too much of either **Killer Instinct** or **Cruis'n USA**.

If that's as good as the machine can do, then I think I might have to spend my money on a PlayStation instead. I've seen **Ridge Racer** and **Toh Shin Den** and both of them outclass **Killer** and **Cruis'n** in the gameplay stakes.

Also, I hear the Ultra 64 is going to be a cartridge machine. That sucks. You know the games are going to be super expensive, and another thing, they won't have as much game on them. Don't you think Nintendo have really messed this one up?

—Harry Ormeischer
New York, NY

Dear Harry,
One thing we've learned in this industry over the past few years is never underestimate Nintendo. When the Game Boy arrived, there were more than a few raised eyebrows and frankly, the Super NES hardware was always better than Genesis. Virtual Boy is kind of mysterious, but nothing beats Ultra 64 for the capacity to generate rumors and gossip. Nobody knows exactly how the finished machine will shape up, but Nintendo have said that it will improve over the hardware used in **Killer Instinct** and **Cruis'n USA**.

You're right in some respects though. **Daytona USA** is a million times better-looking than **Cruis'n** and even the PlayStation **Ridge Racer** gives it a run for its money graphically. We'll just have to wait and see what Nintendo are hiding up their sleeves.

And on the subject of cartridges, we couldn't agree more: They will be expensive and limited in capacity. Both Sony and Sega have technology that makes loading times virtually unnoticeable at best and bearable at worst. Nintendo should have a CD-based machine, but I don't think they will. They like to keep control over everything, and CD just doesn't allow that.

Sony or Sega?

Dear UG,
From all the pre-release hoopla I've seen, your magazine looks like it could finally provide us with an alternative to the myriad of candy-assed videogame mags aimed at pre-teens.

Will you be covering the PS-X system once it's available? Do you expect it to compare to Sega's Saturn?

—Steve Marchese
Palo Alto, CA

Dear Steve.
Well, hopefully this magazine will meet your expectations, since all we want to do is provide solid game coverage for the older gaming audience. What we don't want to do is use embarrassing language, overly generous review scores, or indecipherable screenshots.

As far as PS-X (PlayStation) and Saturn are concerned, we love 'em both and they're definitely going to be a very big part of this magazine. Which is better? Only time and the quality of software will tell. At the moment, things are pretty even, but the PlayStation does have a very big price advantage.

We'll know which machine fared better around January 1996, after the Christmas sales have died down. At the moment though, it's open betting.

Philips Phenom

Dear UG,
I saw the ad for your magazine in the last issue of COMPUTER PLAYER, but I was wondering, will you be covering Philips CD-i?

I haven't been able to find any statistics, prices or game info regarding CD-i. Is this because it flat out sucks, or because it's just not yet big enough to warrant that much coverage?

—Carl Saff
Bloomington, IN

Dear Carl,
CD-i is a very interesting piece of hardware and where appropriate, we'll be covering it. You should remember though, that CD-i was never designed to go head-to-head against Super NES or Genesis, but rather to create a new market, for an interactive CD player. That it has certainly achieved. Admittedly software support has been poor in the past, but titles like **Burn: Cycle** and **Chaos Control** are starting to show what CD-i is really capable of.

Internet Sweat

Dear UG,
First: Am I going to be able to buy your magazine anywhere in Lincoln? I read about it in COMPUTER PLAYER, but I haven't seen it anywhere yet.

Second: Are you planning on putting the magazine on-line?

Third: What's the deal with **Mortal Kombat III**? I thought it was supposed to

be released to arcades last month some time. Is the new version going to be radically different from the first and second versions of the game?

—John Krewson
Lincoln, NE

Dear John,
You'll be able to buy our magazine virtually anywhere, and if you're reading this, you obviously did. As for putting the magazine on-line, we're certainly investigating the possibility and we expect to have a presence on the net pretty soon.

The deal with **Mortal Kombat III** is simple. After months and months of fine tuning, the game is finally ready and should be arriving in arcades right about now. The good news is that it rocks, and that we have a full review later on in the magazine. The bad news is that this new version isn't radically different from the first two. However, it does play as well as, if not better than the prequels, and there are lots of new additions.

Virtual Nonsense

Dear UG,
On that new Fox show, **VR-5**, the woman has a full virtual reality setup on her home computer. The show itself seems pretty lame, but the VR setup looks authentic. I think I even saw the Sony logo on the headset. Is that kind of hardware available anywhere yet?

—Thomas Ambrose
Delafield, WI

Dear Thomas,
Yes it is, in a land where all men live in peace and the streets are made of chocolate and the sun never sets. The technology featured on **VR5** is wholly fictional. While the systems on the show feature super-real graphics, sounds and smells, actual present-day VR systems have the roughly the same effect as taking drugs and climbing into a washing machine.

Knuckle Shuffle

Dear UG,
I saw your preview in VIDEOGAMES magazine. Will ULTIMATE GAMER be put out by the same staff that does VIDEOGAMES? I think VIDEOGAMES does a good job of covering the gaming scene, and I was wondering what you are going to do different. I also sent you a picture of Sonic and Knuckles. I hope you like it.

—Jerry Pearset
Salem, OR

Dear Jerry,
We'll be using some of the same writers that VIDEOGAMES do, and we loved your picture of Sonic and Knuckles, although we thought it inappropriate behavior for a 38-year-old man.

Ode to M2: 3Doh?

Dear UG,
Is the M2 going to be a system in itself, or just an add-on to the 3DO? I've heard conflicting reports. Will you be doing an article about the M2? What the hell does "M2" stand for or refer to? Thanks.

—Kelly Andersen
Henkins, TX

Dear Kelly,
Initially, M2 will be an add-on cartridge for the 3DO, but there are plans to release an all-in-one machine in 1996. You can read more about the system in our spectacular feature starting on page 34. M2 is simply a codename for the technology. Of course, the system may or may not be renamed before its release-date.

What's the score?

Dear UG,
I don't mean to come off sounding like a crusty, incontinent, senile old buffer, but back in my day, we used to have some pretty big scores.

These new games don't seem to even worry about high scores, it's basically this; Fly your spaceship, control your fighter or whatever, get through like (almost always) eight levels and that's it, game over. Used to be on games like **Defender** and **Astro Chase** and stuff, that the point was to get a really high score, maybe even clock it. So why don't new-fangled games let you do that?

—Ralph Furness
Miami, FL

Dear Ralph,
Like everything in this sick old world of ours, it's all about money. Fact is, back in the olden days, coin-ops weren't that profitable a business. As a matter of fact, the average **Defender** player could play for up to an hour on a single quarter. It didn't take game manufacturers long to realize this wasn't such a sound financial proposition.

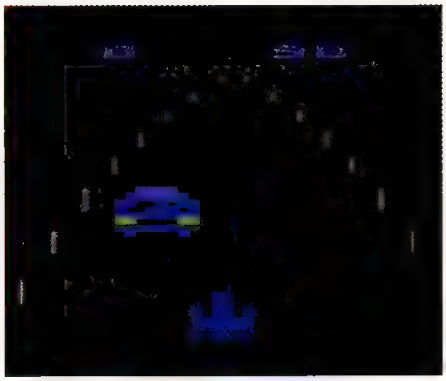
So in came the shorter, more compact video games. Gone was the ability to clock the high-score table, the real incentive was to see the graphics from the various levels. Reach the end and that was it. Game over. Sucks, but what are you gonna do?

More Good Times

Dear UG,
I am really looking forward to your new mag. I think it's about time there was a gamers magazine that treated us like we actually had a freakin' brain, and I plan on picking it up the day it hits.

My question is this: since you guys are going to be the "ultimate" source of info on games, I was wondering if you could have a section of the mag on retro-gaming. You know, stuff like **Intellivision**, **Vectrex**, and **Astrocade**. I think that even though the games we are play now blow the old stuff away, I would still love to read about those classic games. After all, if it wasn't for stone-age carts like **Night Driver**, we'd never have gotten to play awesome CDs like **Ridge Racer**!

—Charles Fenton
Los Angeles, CA



Dear Charles,
We absolutely agree, and that's why we decided to put together our **Flashback** section, which will be devoted entirely to retro-gaming. Think of **Flashback** as your own personal video-game time-machine. You want proof? Just check out page 94 in this issue!

Jerky Letter

Dear UG,
They would rub sandbaskets on my ass-neck and tie me to the pier.

—Saul Rosenberg
New Jersey

Dear Saul,
That's quite enough of that, thank you.

Acclaim Gets Physical

Ever wonder how all those poor, bored professional baseball players pass their time during strikes? Chicago White Sox player (and self-described videogame fan) Frank Thomas has been keeping himself pretty busy.

He's been hanging around Acclaim Entertainment's motion capture studio, having his every movement picked apart by computers and reassembled in the form of a videogame. Frank Thomas "Big Hurt" Baseball, set for fall release, will feature some of the most realistic sports movement yet, thanks to a series of new developments being tested and put to use by techno-freaks Acclaim.

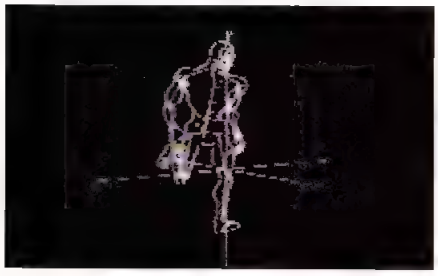
The motion capture studio, the only one of its kind in the world, was created three years ago in anticipation of the new batch of CD-ROM and 64-bit systems. In addition to standard green screen work, Acclaim engineers utilize a motion recording system which can map out and analyze up to 300 points on an object as they move through space. In Thomas' case, 65 reflective sensors were attached to strategic locations on a black lycra body suit. Thomas donned the suit, stood against a black background and went through a full routine of standard baseball moves.

Once these motions were captured, basic skeletons were created upon which could be geometrically modeled any range of textures, colors and even facial expressions. The end result for Acclaim was a realistic-looking model of Thomas, fully capable of being rotated and manipulated in three dimensions.

Although the technology will probably prove most useful in the creation of reality-emulating sports games, Acclaim's 3D modeling procedures can be applied to any figure, from a dog to a bloodthirsty alien monster. Given the rush to produce better and more original sports games, it shouldn't be long before any range of bizarre non-human creatures are stepping up to the plate.

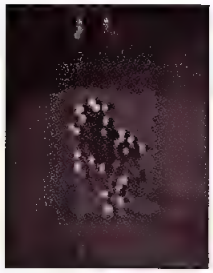
Frank Thomas puts on a mirror-dotted Lycra space suit and flails around in front of a computer-linked camera...

Acclaim's motion capture methods produce incredibly lifelike images, as this simulated hockey player demonstrates.



...allowing the computer to map out every damn nook and cranny of his body...

...and eventually fleshing out that map to produce a lifelike surface replica.



Even cute widdle doggies can be digitized using Acclaim's new technology.

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SEGA SATURN SPORTS: WELCOME TO THE BIG LEAGUES

By Jeff Tschiltsch

With the September launch of the Sega Saturn and Sony Playstation on the horizon, and Nintendo's Ultra-64 looming in the not-too-distant future, sports video gaming stands poised on the threshold of a new era. It couldn't come at a better time. With very few exceptions, sports games in the 16-bit arena have begun to stagnate; there hasn't been a radically different game for the Genesis or SNES in a while. Most "new" games have been no more than "sequels," adding new stats and perhaps a new feature or two.

It's not that the current crop of sports games is bad, far from it. Most are pushing the hardware to the limit, with graphics and playability that a year ago we'd have thought impossible on these platforms. One only has to look at titles like **NBA Live '95** and **World Series Baseball '95** to find stellar examples. But in order for sports games to evolve, more power and storage is required, which is exactly what the new 32-bit machines offer. The leap **FIFA International Soccer** made from its 16-bit incarnation to the incredible 3DO version shows only the tip of the iceberg as far as the potential of 32-bit sports gaming is concerned.

As much as the future of sports games

depends on new hardware, the games themselves will be one of the key factors in determining the success of these expensive new platforms. The lessons can be learned by looking back at the 8- and 16-bit markets. During the time the Nintendo Entertainment System reigned supreme, the video-game market was clearly the domain of 8- to 14-year-old boys. The initial release of the 16-bit Sega Genesis did little to change that, until what turned out to be the most important title ever for that system was released: Electronic Arts' **John Madden Football**. Suddenly the 20-year-old-and-over market was interested in owning a Genesis.

EA followed up the original **Madden** game with a string of hit sports games, notably **NHL Hockey**, **Bulls Vs. Lakers** and **PGA Tour Golf**, stressing realistic gameplay, strategy and graphics, features catering to older game players. EA's original logo, EASN (Electronic Arts Sports Network), garnered such recognition that the ESPN network asked EA to change it, because of the huge similarity, and thus EA Sports was born.

Other major players followed suit, and soon Sega Sports, Sport Accolade and others began challenging EA's dominance in the sports category. Sales of the Genesis exploded, from 1 million units in 1991 to 12 million in 1993, and sports games now account for 43% of all software sold for the Genesis.

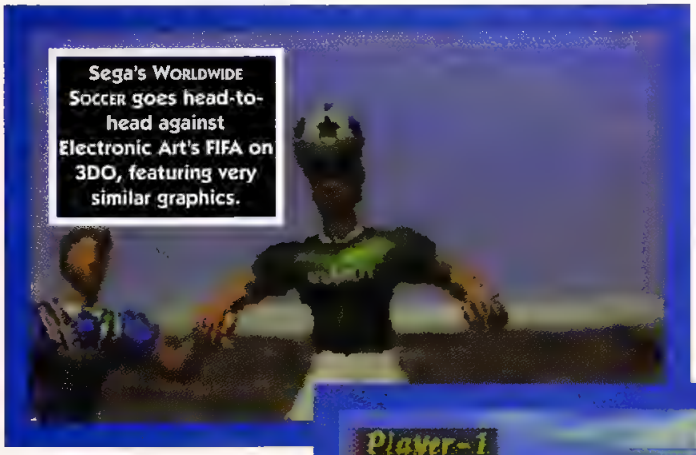
Sega is banking on this trend for its US rollout of the Saturn and is readying four solid titles to be available with the unit's launch in September. Their theory is that sports players are always seeking higher competitive challenges, which explains why each year they keep buying "sequel" cartridges that usually feature slight enhancements and updated stats over the previous version. Since the Genesis sports gamer is a little older, it stands to reason he'll have more income and be willing to part with it in order to play the latest, most realistic sports games available.

The approach has been tried before, when Mattel launched their Intellivision with a full line-up of "advanced" sports games to lure players away from Atari VCS machines (and it might have worked too, if it hadn't been the Great Video Game crash). On the other side of the coin, sales of the first 32-bit gaming system released in the US, the 3DO Multiplayer, languished at low levels until games such as **John Madden Football** and **FIFA International Soccer** were released. Both of these games have been instrumental in the 3DO's struggle to survive, and the pair of them have been featured as pack-in games (**Madden** with Panasonic's player and **FIFA** currently with Goldstar's unit).

Sega knows its market, and with a stunning software lineup made up of **Daytona U.S.A**, **Worldwide Soccer**, **NHL All-Star Hockey**, and **Pebble Beach Golf Links**, the Saturn stands to have the strongest sports library of the new platforms when it debuts in Fall.

So now that you're fully acquainted with the recent history of sports games, let's take a more detailed look at the future....

Hockey will be Sega Sports' Killer App. This is the game that should give the Saturn a real flying start.



Sega's Worldwide Soccer goes head-to-head against Electronic Art's FIFA on 3DO, featuring very similar graphics.

'Sports games now account for 43% of all software sold for the Genesis'

Golf is hugely popular with older players, presenting a more relaxed and enjoyable playing experience for those uncomfortable with fast action games.

NHL ALL-STAR HOCKEY

Get ready to hit the ice with **NHL All-Star Hockey**! While our first glimpse of this title was an extremely early one, based on everything that we've seen so far it looks like this could be the Saturn's "killer app," in much the same way that **FIFA International Soccer** was for the 3DO.

Take the huge number of ways you can play this game as an example. In the Season mode, you can play a full 84-game season just as it would have occurred this year if there hadn't been that nasty little "work-stoppage," or you can choose a 50-game season where you play each team twice, or a 25-game season where each team is played once. Make it to the playoffs and you can either play the traditional Best of Seven series or opt for single game elimination. If you're only interested in playing just the NHL's "second season," you can create your own custom playoff tree where you select the teams and initial match-ups.

Before you're ready for season play, however, you'll want to play a few exhibition matches to get the feel of things or select the Drills option, which lets you work on particular scenarios, such as two-on-one, three-on-one, or power play situations. Custom drill options let you configure any situation you can come up. You can repeat the drill scenario over and over until you feel you've got it right.

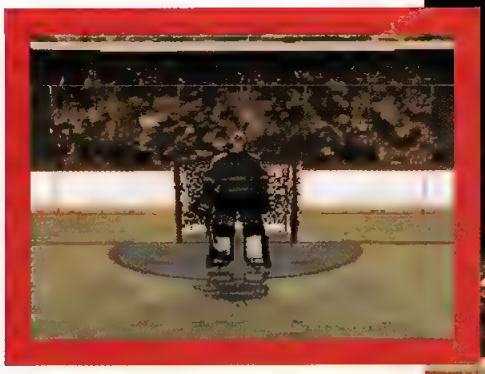
If you're into multi-player games, **NHL All-Star Hockey** was made for you. By using two 6-player multi adapters, you and eleven of your closest friends can play full 6-on-6 hockey, where each participant plays a specific position, including goalie! If you're playing alone there's also a Role-Playing mode where you play a specific position the entire game. This allows you to experience the game as it is really played; for example you could pass the

puck off to one of your teammates, position yourself in front of the goal and then "call" for the puck.

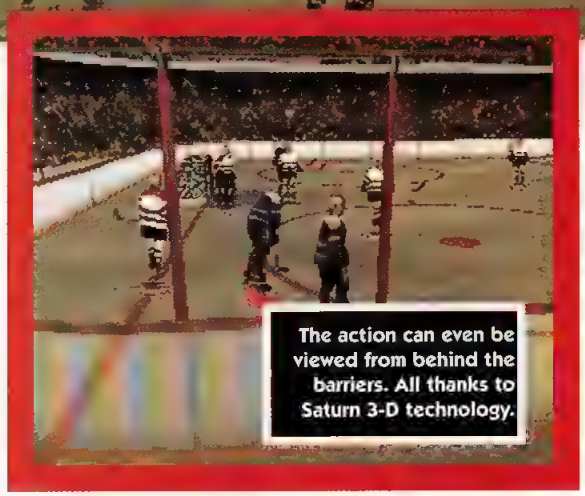
There are 19 different camera angles the game can be played from, made up mainly of left-to-right side scrolling and top-to-bottom vertical scrolling viewpoints with different camera heights. One of the most innovative, however, is the "first-person" viewpoint (sort of "**DOOM** meets the NHL"). Here the perspective is that of the skater's eyes as

"In the Season mode, you can play a full 84-game season"

you move down the ice with the puck just in front of you. What makes this viewpoint particularly interesting is the ability to look over your left or right shoulder via the "flipper" buttons without changing the direction you're skating. All eight controller buttons will be used extensively and in different ways during the game, giving you greater control over the types of shots and checks you can perform.



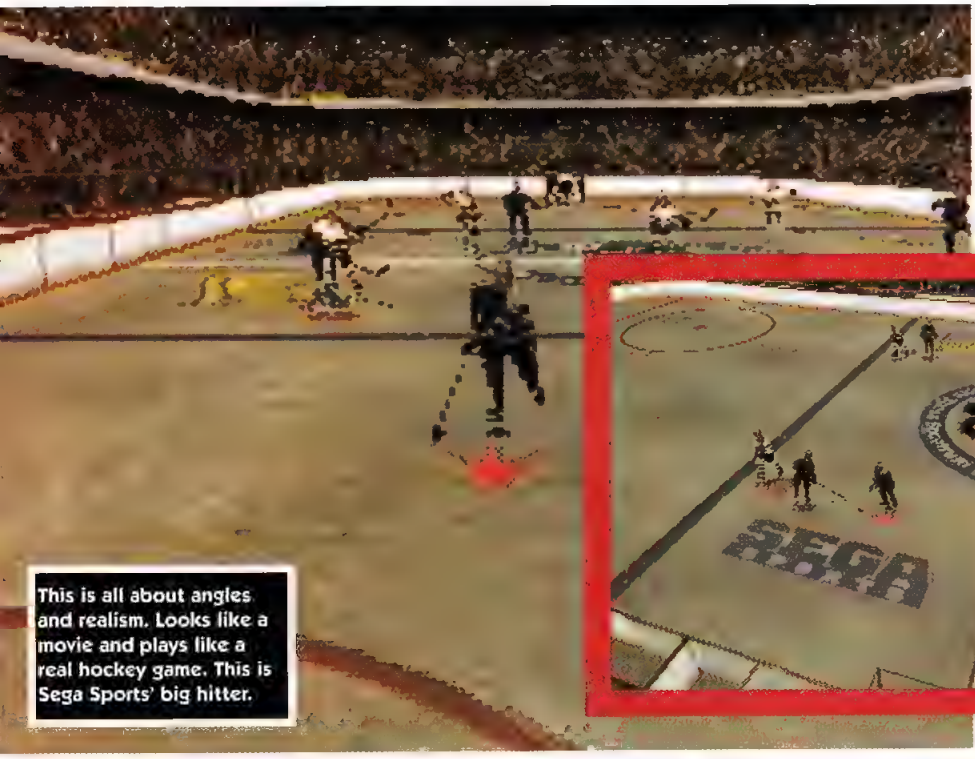
Mike Meischeid, the game's producer at Sega of America, worked closely with several different organizations to create the ultimate video game of his favorite sport. Besides obtaining NHL and NHLPA licenses to include all the real teams and players, Mike enlisted the help of the Hockey Hall of Fame so gamers could learn some of the history of the sport. Sega went on location at the Hall of Fame and filmed a "video walk-through" Hall highlights, which is shown after you win the Stanley Cup. As a way to create some "payback" for players, the entire video can only be seen if you win the Cup in the Full 84-game season mode; winning the cup in any of the other modes shows shorter versions of the video.



The action can even be viewed from behind the barriers. All thanks to Saturn 3-D technology.

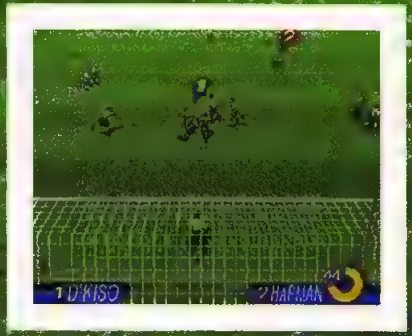
The Hall also provided the pieces of highlight footage that are shown during Marv Albert's "Player Spotlight" segments that occur during the second intermission. As Marv does the narration you'll see highlights from last year's season, such as goal number 802 for Gretzky. Another use of full-motion video is the Locker Room report, hosted by Coach Jacque Labou. Based on your team's performance in the first period, the coach will point out the things you're doing wrong, i.e. giving up too many short-handed goals, too many penalties, etc. Over 30 different humorous segments of the ranting Canadian Labou were filmed.

All in all, the level of depth, detail and playability rank this as one of the best sports games ever to show up outside a real stadium. If this doesn't kick-start the Sega Saturn, then maybe nothing will. This **is** hockey. Pure and dead simple.



This is all about angles and realism. Looks like a movie and plays like a real hockey game. This is Sega Sports' big hitter.

WORLDWIDE SOCCER



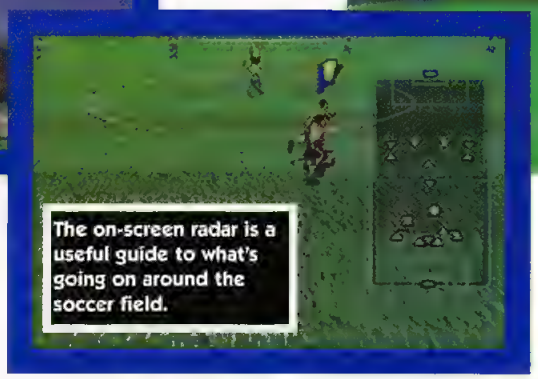
Worldwide Soccer will be the game that 3DO owners take a particular interest in, since **FIFA International Soccer** for the 3DO is widely considered **the** soccer game to beat and a showcase for 32-bit sports gaming. **Worldwide Soccer** is certainly up to the challenge, with fantastic graphics, superb control and a host of options.

Worldwide Soccer is basically an "Americanized" port of one of the first sports games available for the Sega Saturn in Japan, **Victory Goal**. The Japanese Professional League teams and players have been replaced with international World-Cup style teams such as Italy, Germany, Brazil, and of course, the good ol' USA!

The game supports several types of play modes besides standard exhibition matches. In the World and S-League modes you can select between season lengths of 22 or 44 games and the type of tie-breakers you want (penalty kicks or overtime). There are three Cup Tournament modes: Bronze (Best of 4), Silver (Best of 8), and Gold (Best of 12). In the Bronze and Silver Cups you can choose which teams compete in the tournament; in the Gold Cup all teams compete. There's even a Penalty Shoot-Out mode where you can hone your clutch shooting and goal keeping skills.

Under the Options menu you can select from four different skill levels, choose from 3-, 6- or 15-minute halves, and set the weather to fine, rain, or random. There are three different controller configurations that let you activate certain

Penalty shoot-outs are an awful way to end a game, but a good test of skill for goalie and player alike.



The on-screen radar is a useful guide to what's going on around the soccer field.

"specialty" moves such as lobs, short kicks and chip kicks. Up to four controllers can be used with the optional multi-player adapter and each controller can have its own specific setup.

Before your team takes to the field you can adjust your starting lineup and select one of four different tactics: Offense, Defense, Counter and Normal. Other coaching options include six different formations and putting your defensive players in either a 'line' or 'sweeper' configuration. Goal Keepers can be controlled either manually or by the computer.

"FIFA Soccer for the 3DO is considered the soccer game to beat"

After watching the players run onto the pitch, a wild presentation as the camera zooms and rotates about the stadium, you're ready for the opening kick off! The initial camera angle defaults to a vertical-field perspective, with the players running up and down the screen towards the goals. While you are playing the game you can zoom the camera in or out using the left and right triggers on the controller, and from the Pause menu you can rotate the field view in 45 degree increments, allowing you to play the game in either a side-scrolling viewpoint or one similar to the Genesis, SNES or PC versions of **FIFA International Soccer**.

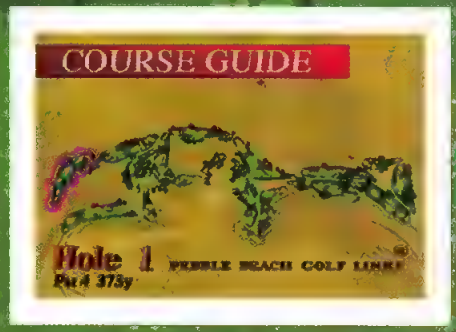
The graphics in this game are outstanding, featuring large players and realistic animation. The frame rate is quite good and lets you pick up subtle details like the different leg action used for a short passing kick and high lob. While the graphics are what initially catch your eye, the controls are what make the game. The player response to the controller is extremely accurate, without any frustrating delays to button presses. Thanks to the shoulder tackle move you can make some contact with other players in an attempt to steal the ball, but if you perform a sliding tackle from behind you can expect to see the SGI-rendered referee pop up and issue a penalty card.

The action in **Worldwide Soccer** is non-stop, but the pace feels more realistic than other soccer games currently on the market. For example, there are few games that allow you to come to a complete stop in front of a defender, fake a move one way and then dribble past him in the other. Computer-controlled offensive players will wait for you to overcommit a defender and then pass the ball to the man left open.

There are several musical themes that can be played in the background or turned off during the game. The crowd is part of the game, getting louder when a player makes a break towards the goal with the ball. And with that kind of attention to atmosphere, this game is going to be absolutely huge.

The 3-D camera angles are reminiscent of FIFA on 3DO but if anything, are smoother and easier to follow. You can adjust them during play.

PEBBLE BEACH GOLF LINKS



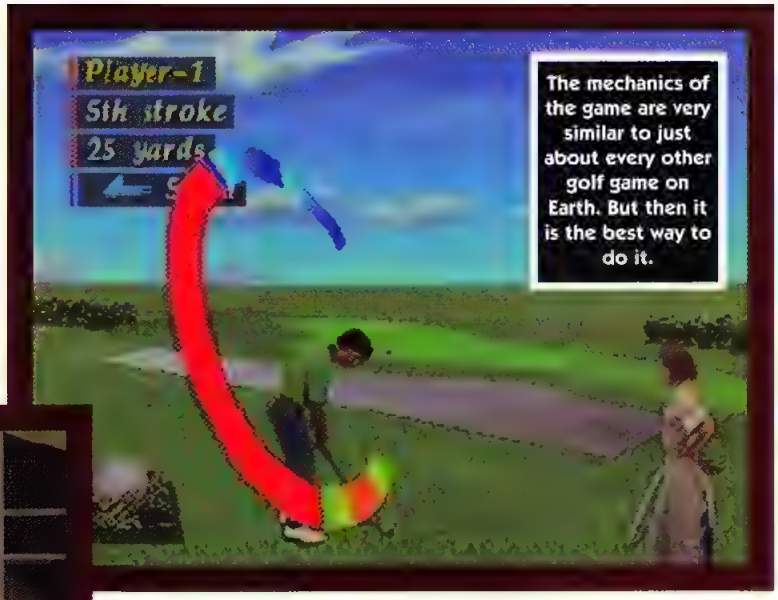
It's a simple fact: every high-end platform needs a great golf game. Why? Because while the kids are clamoring for the SGI-rendered **Super Bloody Kombat IV**, Dad is the guy with the $500 in his back pocket that can pop for the new system. Electronic golf is one of those game categories that seems to attract the older player like no other; I know guys who spent hundreds of dollars to upgrade their PCs when **Links 386/Pro** was released, and for many it's the only game they own!

With that in mind, Sega and T&E Soft have upgraded their venerable **Pebble Beach Golf Links** title to take advantage of the Saturn's hardware capabilities. Full motion video is used extensively in the game, from the impressive introduction sequence to the spectacular helicopter fly-bys of each hole. Craig Stadler is the game's "resident pro," appearing on the screen narrating the fly-bys, offering advice, and commenting on his own performance if you play with him!

The game's graphics feature photo-realistic details, from the digitized golfers and "gallery" crowds to the textured fairways and greens. Golf is superbly animated, especially your surrogate golfer who places his ball on the tee, confers with his caddie, and holds his putter in front of him when trying to determine the lay of the green. Touches like the turf flying from a divot and the cloud movement accurately reflecting the indication on the wind mete enhance the realism further.

The controls are similar to most golf games; tee up and set your aim to adjust for wind and obstacles, choose the

Full-Motion Video is playing an increasingly more important role in CD-based software and you get to look at gorgeous guys like this.



The mechanics of the game are very similar to just about every other golf game on Earth. But then it is the best way to do it.

correct club (with or without your caddie's help), adjust your stance if you want to hook your shot around that dog-leg left, and then swing the club. The swing meter is an arc suspended around the golfer, representing the path the club would take on your back swing. The color gradient increments help you gauge your shot strength in terms of the percentage of the club's distance.

"Dad is the guy with the $500 that can pop for the new system..."

The first press of the button will start the meter, the next press sets the swing strength and sends the meter back down towards the ball. At the bottom of the swing arc is the "sweet-spot," indicated in red. If you stop the meter in that area you'll nail your shot; stop the meter too early or too late and you'll slice or hook respectively.

A variety of options are available and you can elect to see fly-bys of each hole before you tee off, turn on or off the "shot path," or select one of three different "ball views." The default view has you watch the ball sail off into the distance until it's about to hit the ground, at which point the camera zooms to that spot and shows the ball rolling to a stop. There is also a reverse view, which is a camera angle positioned in front of the ball's destination, so you see the ball flying towards the camera. The most spectacular, however, is the "ball view," with the camera suspended just behind the ball. This view shows off the Saturn's powerful scaling abilities, as the ball soars up into the air and then plummets back down towards the ground.

From the main menu you can choose which of the seven different types of game modes you wish to play, from selecting a hole to practice, playing a solo round, taking on your friends in a Skins Match or going for the big bucks in the Pebble Beach Open. Up to four players can join a round, either human or computer-controlled, and the Quick Start menu selection will remember your choices from the last time you played. The Saturn RAM keeps track of up to ten players' statistics in 20 categories, such as longest drive, percentage of fairway drives, best scores, etc. All in all, this is one of the most complete golf sims ever.

Fear of

a Black Planet

Or how Sega plans to rule the world with Saturn technology. The question is: Could this be too little, and much too late?

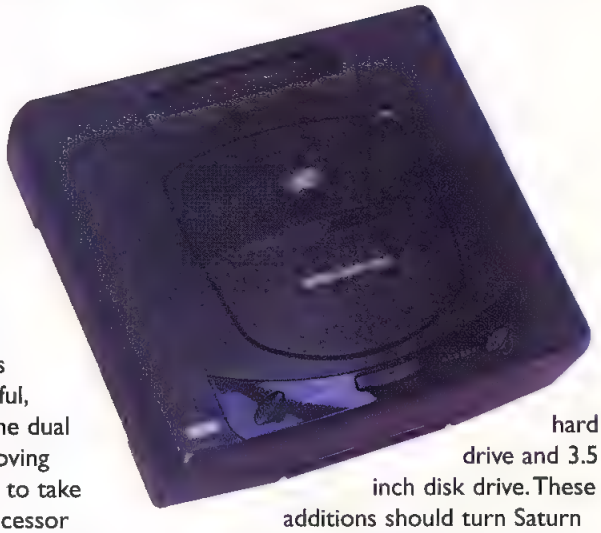
September 2nd 1995 heralds a new age for Sega. It marks the US launch of their 32-bit Multimedia games machine, the Sega Saturn. It also marks the beginning of the biggest battle Sega have ever entered; the domination of the 32-bit market.

Genesis fitted the target market perfectly, a cool system, cool games and excellent marketing. Now Saturn is going to have to repeat that success. Sony however, have other plans for Saturn. To date, Sony are committed to a lower price and a more competitive software line up for their PlayStation. In Japan, this has already caused a considerable amount of grief on the shelves.

Sega claim to have outsold PlayStation by 30%, and Sony claim similar success for their machine? So who do you believe? Well, our retail sources suggest that PlayStation is in fact ahead, but not by 30%, and the balance shifts with the release of each new game. Expect Saturn to do some catching up when **Daytona** (huge in Japanese arcades) is released.

So what are the problems with Saturn? Well, it's powerful, that cannot be denied, but the dual processor architecture is proving problematic. Most games fail to take advantage of the second processor when moving graphics around, instead using the second chip for cursory tasks, like decompression or sprite control.

This could be a positive. It seems obvious that full utilization of the second chip could make the Saturn a force to be reckoned with, but how did the machine ever get as far as stores with such weird technical problems? Either Sega rushed it out to catch up with PlayStation, or they deliberately added the second chip with the future in mind. Sega's own conversion of **Daytona** makes full use of the hardware and initial reports suggest that it's awesome. Would-be Saturn owners also have more than games to look forward to. Already in the works are a full-motion video cartridge (from JVC) and a computer accessories kit, including keyboard, hard drive and 3.5 inch disk drive. These additions should turn Saturn into a powerful and fully-fledged multimedia system. Sega also have a deal running with Microsoft to develop an operating system, which may or may not be used as the basis for the Saturn computer system. Although the computer set-up is destined for a Japanese launch soon, Sega have no current plans to release the system here, preferring instead to focus all their attention on the machine's gaming potential.

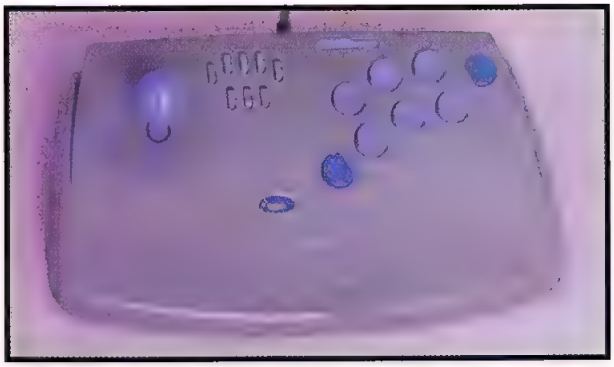


And Saturn is a gamer's dream come true. Great polygon handling, superb conventional graphics (sprites, scrolling etc.) and absolutely the best sound chip in the business. 32 channels of Yamaha digital sex. Although it seems kind of strange, given that many Saturn games play music straight from the CD, Sony opted for a slightly less glamorous but equally impressive 24-channel chip. Head-to-head, both machines sound as good as each other, although our resident synth expert reckons the Sega unit just has the edge.

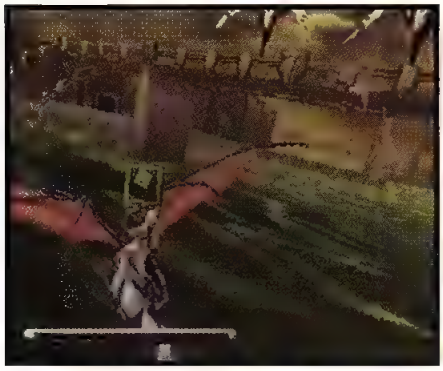
Games have to look good too though, and Saturn definitely has the PlayStation beat when it comes to conventional games. Scrolling, sprite handling and parallax are all squeezed from the

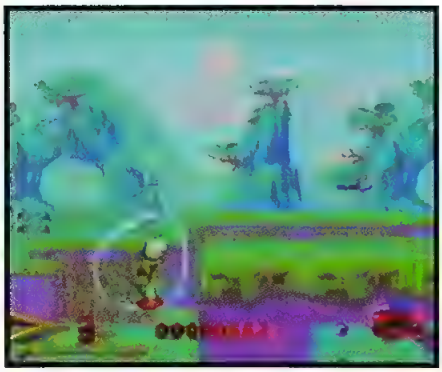
Completely new joypads for the US...

...and a slick-looking black finish.



Sega's joystick for Saturn is one of the best we've seen so far. A steering wheel will follow soon.





Saturn with diuretic ease. 3-D though? Well, PlayStation definitely has the edge, at this point anyway.

But here's the thing: Although Sony has huge support from developers and third-party software houses, what they don't have is access to the Sega software range, and in arcades at least, Sega rule. **Daytona**, **Virtua Fighter 1 and 2**, **Virtua Racing**, **Star Wars**, the list is endless and Sega have 'em all. They also have their 16-bit stuff, some of which may end up on Saturn. A **Sonic** game is already in the works.

Sony have a cool machine, and a cheaper one, but the battle is far from over. American tastes are unpredictable and Sega brand loyalty may yet prove to be the deciding factor. One thing that may slow Sega down though, or at least cloud the issue, is the miserable 32X. Sega plan to release an all-in-one 32X/Genesis machine shortly after the Saturn, giving consumers two Sega next generation choices. In a fickle market, Sega have generated a lot of confusion.

Saturn is a great machine, no doubt about it, but by comparison, the 32X is an expensive unwieldy, badly designed, bastardized piece of weirdness.

And what of Nintendo? How will Ultra 64 shape up against Saturn? Very well, one would hope, since Nintendo and Sega have been historical rivals, although Sony's presence in the market has diluted that somewhat.

Some of the complaints levelled at the Saturn's hardware are pretty much justified. **Daytona**'s low frame rate and awful clipping levels mean that **Ridge Racer** has to take the racing crown, technically at least.

Daytona's failings are something of a mystery though, especially when compared to the Saturn's own **Panzer Dragoon**. Where **Daytona** is choppy and blocky, **Panzer** is smooth and sharp. Perhaps the fault lies with AM2, Sega's arcade division, a group of people who aren't used to pushing new technology. When designing arcade games, if you can't get something to work, you buy a new chip. Unfortunately, Saturn is what it is. It's a great machine, but is it really one hundred dollars better than PlayStation?

—Frank O'Connor

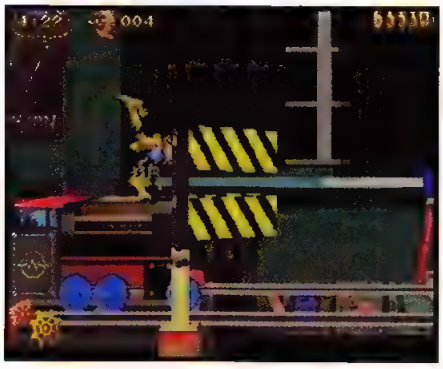
"They also have their 16-bit stuff, some of which may end up on the Saturn... a Sonic game is already in the works."

TECHNO UPROAR

CPU:	2xHitachi SH2 32-bit
Sound:	16-bit/32-channel PCM.
Color:	32,000 on screen
CD Drive:	JVC double speed
Clock speed:	27Mhz
Polygons per second:	500,000
Sprites:	Better than PlayStation!

Overall

Great 2-D machine with impressive polygon performance.



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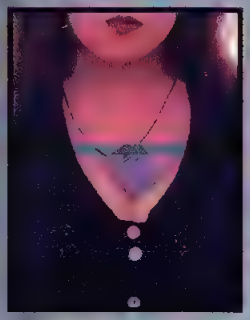
Beta Testing

Sony's PlayStation is coming and games may never be the same again...

Powerful, sharp and mean. And the machine isn't exactly wimpy either.

To say the Sony PlayStation is an impressive piece of hardware is something of an understatement. This machine, more than any other in the history of gaming, represents a true quantum leap in gaming technology. Sony mean business this time and it looks like they're here to stay.



Memory Cards have huge potential.

Sony CDs are black, purely for style.

The cards can hold lots of saved games.

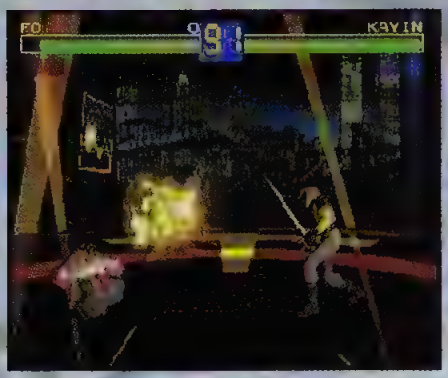
The PlayStation's evolution is a long and complicated story, and its apparently inevitable success can be pinned squarely (and ironically) on the shoulders of Nintendo, probably the PlayStation's biggest threat. PlayStation started life as a CD unit for the now ancient Super NES. Sony's expertise in the field of CD was appreciated by the perfectionists at Nintendo, and work was started on a CD add-on for the 16-bit console.

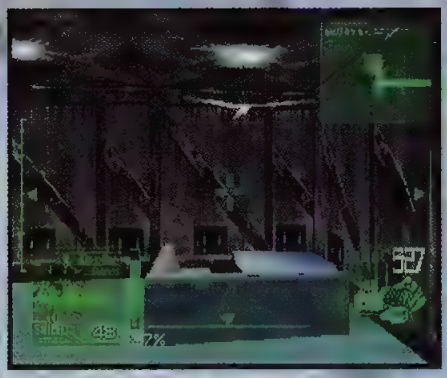
Sony were to manufacture the unit, and as part of the deal, they were to license the SNES technology, producing an all-in-one Super NES and CD unit, to be called, you guessed it, the Sony PlayStation. Things didn't quite go to plan however, and the Sony-Nintendo deal was fouled by a combination of paranoia and financial stress. Nintendo wanted a cheaper unit and they balked at the thought of a third-party Nintendo-compatible machine. Philips seized the bait and took over production of the Nintendo CD drive, a machine which has yet to emerge.

Not to be put off, Sony continued research and development into a multimedia games machine, and early last year, announced that the Sony PlayStation was nearing completion, only this time, 32-bit technology was the key factor. The PlayStation was going to be very powerful indeed. Sega, who were working on Saturn, a very similar project, started playing catch-up. In the end though, Sega actually had their machine in stores two weeks before the PlayStation showed up.

The games industry is a cynical one, and many thought that Sony had gotten in deeper than they could handle. After all, this industry was dominated by Sega and Nintendo, companies whose sole focus was on gaming. How could Sony produce a competing machine?

The answer emerged slowly as more and more developers got their hands on the Sony hardware, a machine so impressive that game companies were falling over themselves to get development kits. A typical example is Capcom, a once loyal Nintendo licensee, who are now producing upwards of 60 percent of their new product on PlayStation. In this respect at least, Saturn appears to be on the back burner.





In Japan, where the machines have now been on sale for six months, PlayStation appears to have a clear lead. The release of **Daytona** on Saturn may affect this situation, but at the moment, PlayStation has a far better software catalogue, with a larger range of product and more importantly, greater variety. So how will it work in the USA?

Well, it might not be so clear cut. In Japan, technology and quality are by far the most important factors in buying decisions. In America, marketing is where the real muscle is. Sony may have an uphill struggle trying to convince Sega-savvy kids to buy their somewhat antiseptic machine. Presenting the slick PlayStation as a bad-ass game machine could be problematic. Even the name has connotations of a Fisher-Price mentality.

Sony do have one huge ace up their corporate sleeve. Price. Sony are more than prepared to take an initial loss on hardware sales, the logic being that they more than recoup that interest on software sales. The PlayStation could retail for as little as $250 and according to Sony themselves, will definitely be cheaper than Saturn. The one unknown factor in all this is the new Nintendo machine. Ultra 64 could give everyone a nasty shock. Both Sega and Sony are aware of this, but are taking a bullish attitude and talk of "vapourware" is pretty rife these days. The quality of software available on the PlayStation is without peer. Impressive graphics, CD-quality soundtracks and hot licenses like **Ridge Racer**, **Darkstalkers** and **Mortal Kombat III** ought to give the new console a head start.

To date, over 200 companies are producing software for PlayStation. To put this in perspective, it took Nintendo years to achieve that kind of support. Sony had it before launch.

But is the machine good? Well, yes. It's unequivocally better than anything else currently on the market. The whole package is wonderfully put together, from the cool memory cards, all the way up to the unmatched graphics engine. **CyberSled** from Namco, for example, is actually superior to the original arcade machine, with better graphics and a far better soundtrack.

This is pretty much the first time that home gaming technology has actually caught up with arcade hardware. Gamers aren't stupid and with all the best marketing in the world, the quality of the Sony machine is its prime advantage. This Christmas is going to be very interesting indeed. There's a new kid in town, his name is PlayStation.

—Frank O'Connor

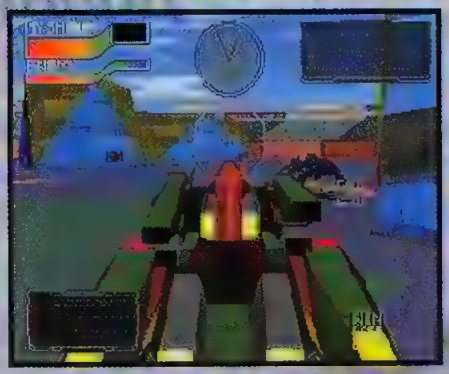
TECHNO UPROAR

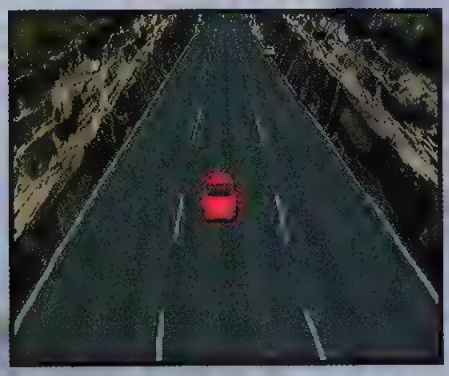
CPU:	**R3000A (32 Bit)**
Sound:	**16 bit/24 channel PCM.**
Color:	**32,000 on screen**
CD Drive:	**Sony double speed**
Clock speed:	**33Mhz**
Polygons per second:	**500,000**
Sprites:	**Map to geometry**

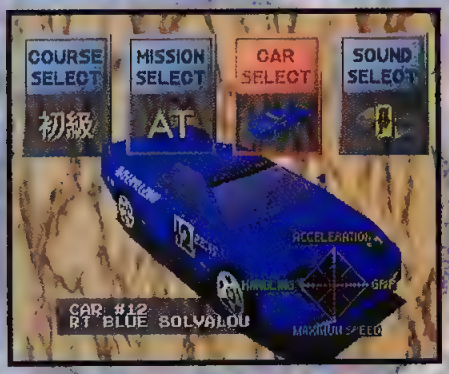
Overall

A graphic powerhouse with some sprite problems. 3-D is its forte.

"Presenting the slick PlayStation as a bad-ass game machine could be problematic."

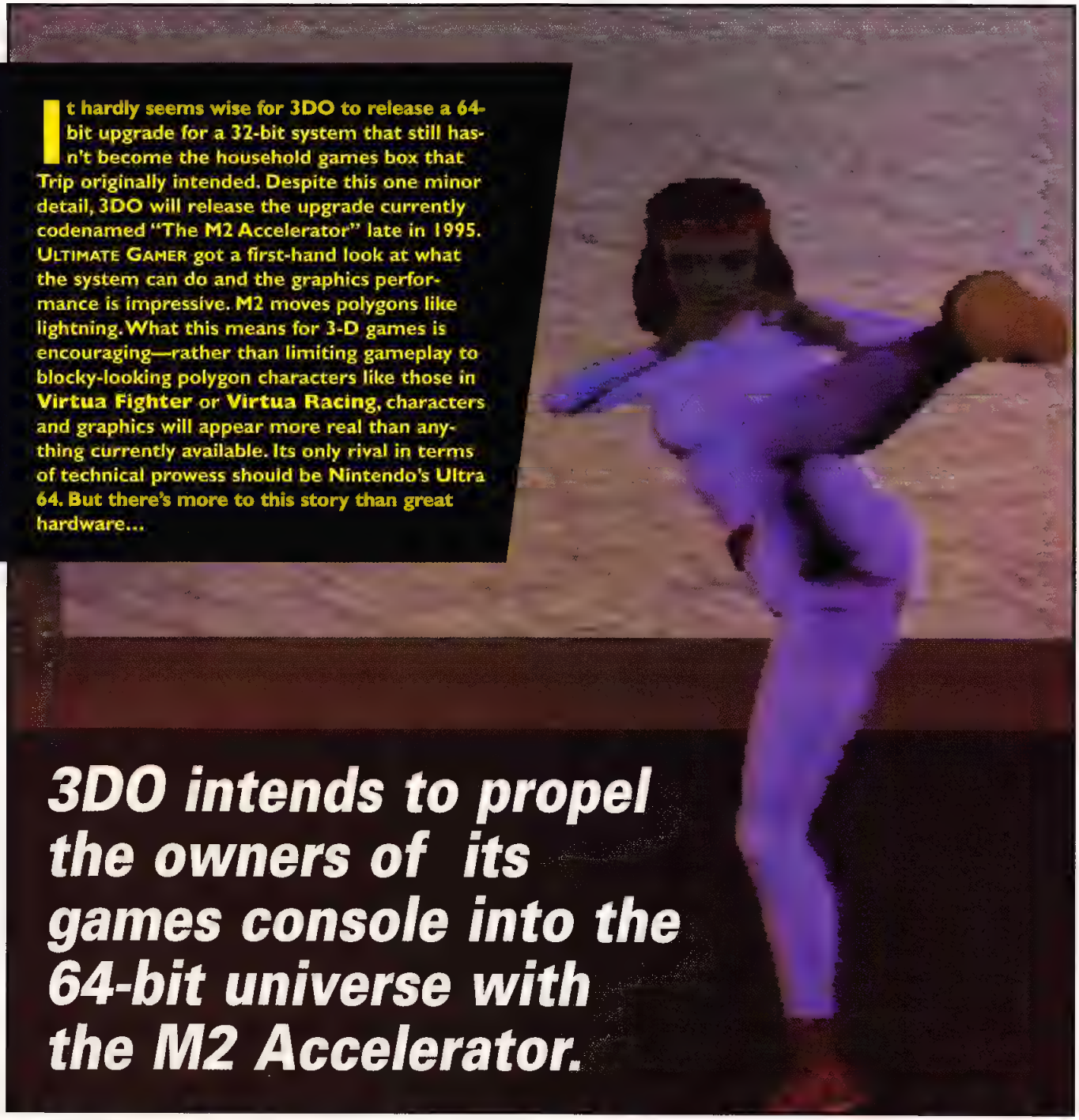






Great hardware... where's the games?

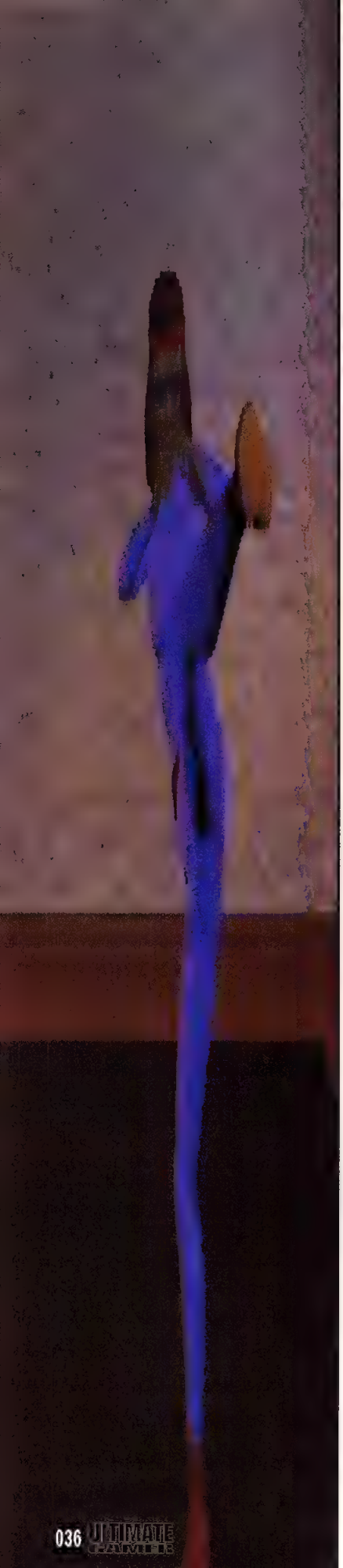
It hardly seems wise for 3DO to release a 64-bit upgrade for a 32-bit system that still hasn't become the household games box that Trip originally intended. Despite this one minor detail, 3DO will release the upgrade currently codenamed "The M2 Accelerator" late in 1995. ULTIMATE GAMER got a first-hand look at what the system can do and the graphics performance is impressive. M2 moves polygons like lightning. What this means for 3-D games is encouraging—rather than limiting gameplay to blocky-looking polygon characters like those in **Virtua Fighter** or **Virtua Racing**, characters and graphics will appear more real than anything currently available. Its only rival in terms of technical prowess should be Nintendo's Ultra 64. But there's more to this story than great hardware...

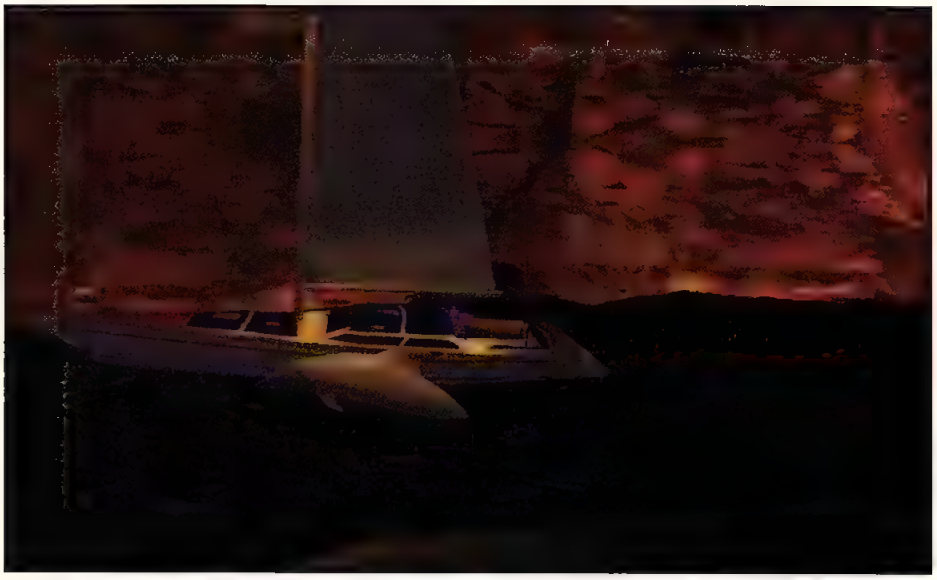


3DO intends to propel the owners of its games console into the 64-bit universe with the M2 Accelerator.

PLUG INTO 64-BIT

The M2 accelerator plugs directly into the expansion port in the rear of the unit. The M2 contains the Power PC chip, allowing game designers to move graphics with as many as one million polygons per second. (This gives M2 an edge above the competition. Both the Sony PlayStation and the Sega Saturn are capable of generating 500,000 polygons per second.) All of the previously released 3DO titles can be played on the system, as well as the new 64-bit M2 games.





Despite having the most powerful technical specs yet announced, the name of the game is still software. Games drive this industry and 3DO has become well aware of that fact. Which is why 8 or 10 games will be available for M2 at launch as well as a pack-in for the 64-bit upgrade. In addition, four hot arcade ports will also be available in addition to those 8 or 10 titles, one of which will be **Mortal Kombat III**.

The truth is that there is still a lot of support for the system. 3DO still has the least expensive licensing fee in the industry compared to Sony, Sega or NIntendo. (On this point we have not included Atari.) 3DO has learned from its mistakes. Its in-house games division, Studio 3DO, is currently on a mission to create killer-apps for the current 3DO system as well as M2. The specific nature of these so-called "killer-apps" is still hidden under a veil of secrecy.

There's nothing that will make game developers drool faster than new technology that allows them to make better toys. Though no third-party developers have officially announced that they will be producing games for the system, Electronic Arts and Interplay are said to be on board already.

The retail price for M2 is still up in the air. However, sources have quoted as low as 99 dollars and as high as $299. If history has taught them anything, it is that price is also a major factor in the decision to invest in a game system. After all, $299 is the estimated retail price for a Sony PlayStation. Betting on another platform may seem more desirable than trading up to the unknown. It's safe to say that the games industry has evolved into a four-horse race, with 3DO coming in as the long-shot. At least they're in the race.

—Chris Gore

3DO M2 Specs

Highlights

Custom Processors	10 custom coprocessors
Bus Bandwidth	528 MBytes/Sec
Graphics Performance	100 Million pixels/sec rendering 1 Million polygons per second 700K polygons per second with all features

CPU

Type	Power PC 602
Speed	66MHz RISC
Instruction/Data caches	64Kbits total (32K/32K)
Floating Point Math Capability	132 MFLOPS (Million Floating Point Operations per Second)

Memory

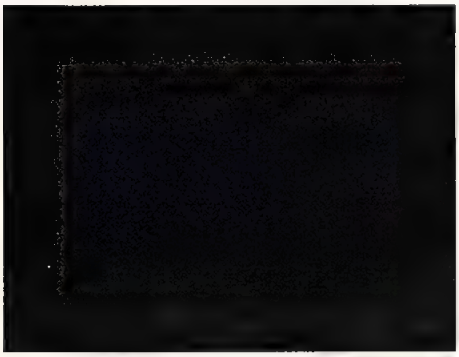
Main Memory (SDRAM,ROM)	48 Mbits
Bus	64-bit
Cache coherent memory system	

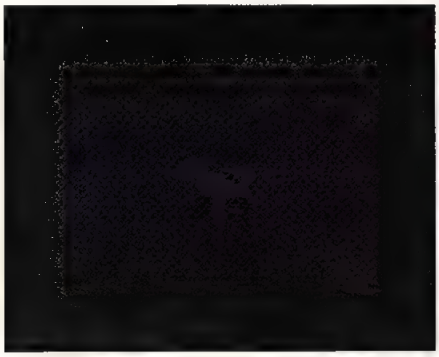
Graphics

Resolution	640x480 and 320x240x24 or 16 bit color
Full Motion Video	MPEG-1 video built-in
MPEG engine supports JPEG decompression	

"BOSSIE THE COW" IN 32 AND 64-BIT

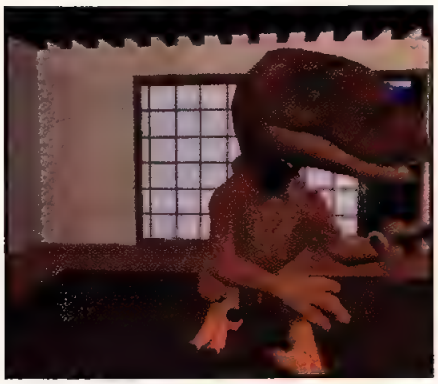
The top half represents an image of a cow one would expect to see on a 32-bit system. The cow on the bottom half is running on 3DO's 64-bit M2 technology. Unlike the 32-bit cow, which is pixilated and blocky, the M2 cow and fence remain clear and smooth even close up. M2 features unique filtering and mapping capabilities that smooth the appearance and texture of an object ("Bossie the Cow," in this case) as the camera moves closer or farther away from the object. In other words, regardless of your angle or distance from the object, the image remains realistic and clear. (No plans were revealed for Bossie to star in her own video game. However, there are those who have said the 3DO system is in need of a cute and cuddly mascot. Hmmm.)





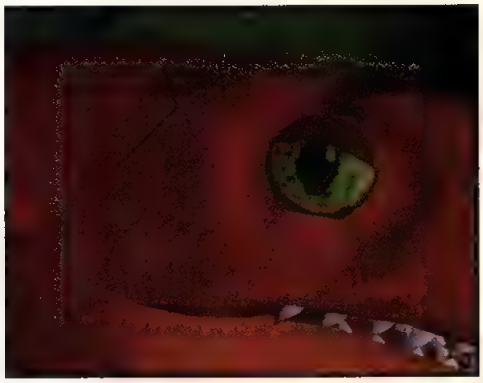
POOR BOSSIE GETS LOST IN THE FOG

These three shots of "Bossie" demonstrate M2's fogging effect. Here you see exponentially calculated fogging—that is, the opacity varies based on the distance of an object from the camera. Much like you'd find in nature, the object comes in to view as you move closer to it. (Can you say "Mascot?")



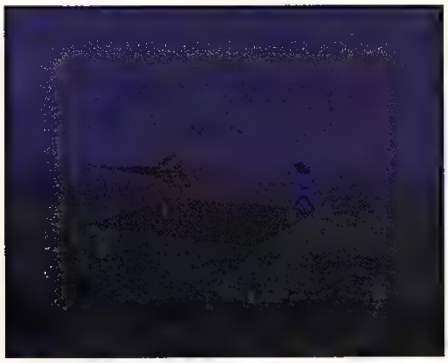
A 64-BIT DINOSAUR EYE

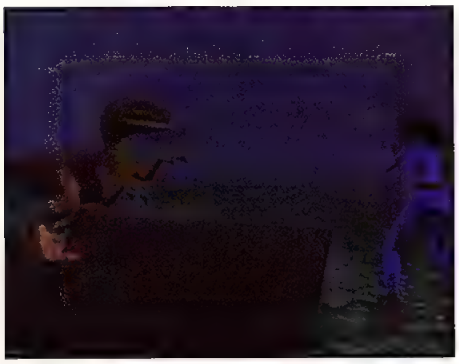
This close up of a dinosaur's eye demonstrates M2 technology's texture-mapping capabilities enhanced with filtering. The dinosaur is rendered in polygons. Even close up, the eye and the dinosaur's skin maintain their clarity and are extremely clear and smooth, without pixilation. (Mr. Spielberg, I'm ready for my close up.)

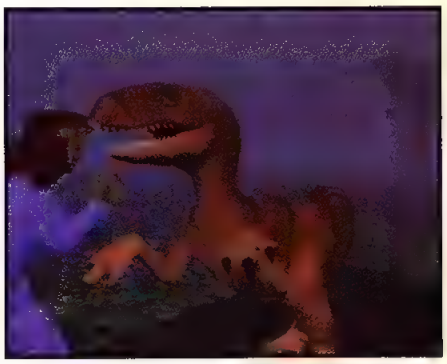


SHEENA THE KICKBOXING QUEEN AND DINOSAUR IN FOG

These three slides of "Sheena and the Dinosaur" also demonstrate M2's fogging effect. This kind of effect is admittedly pointless in a combat game, but will serve simulations very well indeed. The combination of hardware-driven 3-D and built-in lighting effects is a powerful formula indeed. And this can only be done on a 64-bit chip.







Last of its Nine Lives?

Atari is now about to face its biggest challenge yet. Can the big cat survive?

Unkind things have been said about Atari. In fact, one industry pundit was quoted as saying Atari couldn't market immortality. The Jaguar has been around for quite some time now and it simply hasn't achieved the sales Atari need to become a real force in the modern games market. Can CD change that fact?

CD certainly makes sense for Atari. Their greatest burden is the cost of manufacturing cartridges. Atari are a relatively small operation and cartridge prices are very high. If CDs became the more accepted format for Jaguar, then Atari could afford to manufacture more units at less cost and more importantly, less risk.

For the consumer though, things aren't quite so simple. For one thing, they're going to have to buy the Jaguar CD add-on. Add-ons are generally an expensive and unpopular way of upgrading your machine, but in the case of the Jaguar CD things are a little easier. It's cheap. The Jag CD is set to sell for a mere $149, making it the cheapest CD add-on for any console ever. And for the first time in ages, Atari seem to have come up with an acceptable design. The unit simply plugs into the cartridge port, plugs into a power supply and you're ready to go.

There are two criticisms that can be levelled at the design of the beast. One is that the CD lid is a touch flimsy, and the other is that it looks like a toilet. Opening the CD unit makes it look even more lavatory-esque.

If you can cope with that, you now have a huge technical problem to overcome. Single Speed Drive. Those words send chills up the spine of anyone who's ever used a PC CD-ROM, or even a Sega CD. Single speed means longer loading times, greater access and an awful lot of waiting around. Patience is a virtue required for this drive.

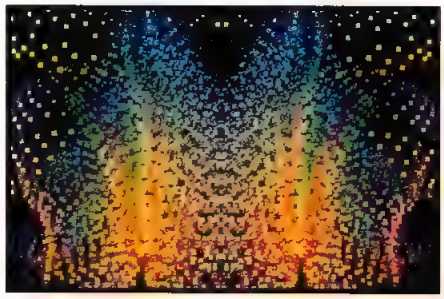
On the upside, it does mean you can store around 750 Megabytes of data on a single disc. This kind of storage will come as a welcome relief to Jaguar owners who have been disappointed with the scale and size of previous games.

CD will also allow digital music to be mixed with gameplay. The Jaguar has a powerful sound chip, but it has been sadly neglected until now. Lack of memory was also a problem, since sampled sounds take up a lot of room.

But like any machine, the make-or-break point for Jaguar CD will hinge on software. The Jaguar CD needs games to survive. Atari must come up with the goods this time. Over the last couple of years they have made and broken dozens of promises, shipped games late or failed to ship them at all. **Battlezone 2000** has been on the release schedule since the machine was launched, and yet we still don't even have a picture of it. Sadly, this is typical.

The CD does seem to have interested quite a number of parties though, and we can look forward to conversions of **Primal Rage**, **Creature Shock** and possibly even **Mortal Kombat 3**, although this has yet to be confirmed.

The actual casing is attractive if a little on the odd side.



VIRTUAL LIGHT MACHINE offers interesting musical possibilities.

Jaguar controllers are among the worst ever designed. Ugly and bulky.

JAGUAR

JAGUAR

JAGUAR

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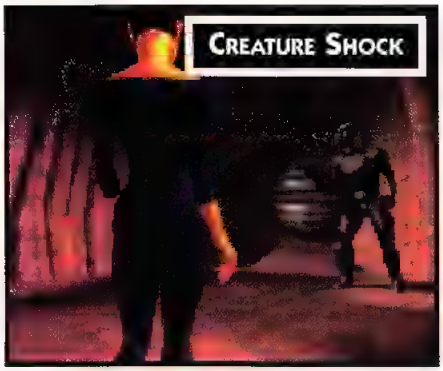
BATTLEMORPH


CREATURE SHOCK

DRAGON'S LAIR

CDs are a much simpler investment than cartridges. No major software house can afford to ship low volumes in cartridge format. CD is far less risky though, and you can expect support from the likes of Virgin, Acclaim and others.

The first batch of games from Atari will feature a rather drab collection of old games and obscure new ones.

Leading the pack is the much anticipated **Battlemorph**. This is a very much improved sequel to **Cybermorph**, the first ever Jaguar game. this time you have more freedom of movement, more weaponry and a lot more actual game at your disposal.

Highlander is an action game based not on the movie, but on the slightly deranged cartoon spin-off.

Dragon's Lair will also make an appearance courtesy of Ready Soft. The Jag CD conversion means that there is now a version of this game available for every single electrical appliance on Earth, including Coleco Vision and the Hoovermatic 3000.

Waiting in the wings are Argonaut's blaster **Creature Shock** and **Blue Lightning**, a Jaguar conversion of the old Lynx game.

What Jaguar owners are really waiting to see though, are the fruits of the deal between Atari and Sega. Late last year, Atari won a very important legal battle with Sega over some patents Atari had held since the VCS and before. Rather than go the distance in court, Sega opted to settle in a deal worth nearly two hundred million dollars. Not only did this give Atari some much needed cash, it also gave them the option to produce Sega titles for the Jaguar.

Now it has been reported that Atari have the rights to everything except **Sonic the Hedgehog**, but this is highly unlikely. Sega are likely to be very protective of killer apps like **Daytona** and **Virtua Fighter**.

As yet, Atari have failed to announce a single Sega title they plan to convert. Hardly the best way to instill confidence in the market. That lack of commitment suggest that the Sega deal may be far from black and white.

So do we think that the Jaguar CD has a chance? Well, yes. It has as good a chance as any other machine. It's cheap, it's powerful and it works. What could make it fail though is a low level of support from third-party software houses.

Atari have already shown that they can't be trusted to deliver goods on time. The Jaguar CD is months late and still there's no finished software.

As PlayStation and Saturn head ever nearer to the American market, Atari's big predator may turn out to be just another pussy.

TECHNO UPROAR

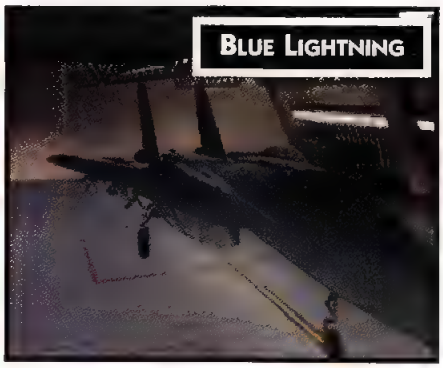
CPU:	Uses Jaguar Chip Set
Sound:	CD tracks play through Jag
Color:	32,000 on screen
CD Drive:	Philips single speed
Clock speed:	NA
Polygons per second:	NA
Sprites:	NA

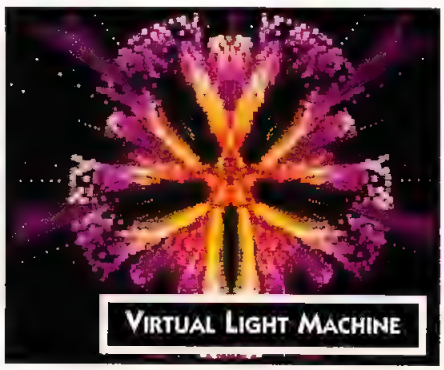
Overall

A very basic CD drive, quite slow, but definitely cheap.

"The Jaguar CD suffers from an impossibly slow single speed drive"

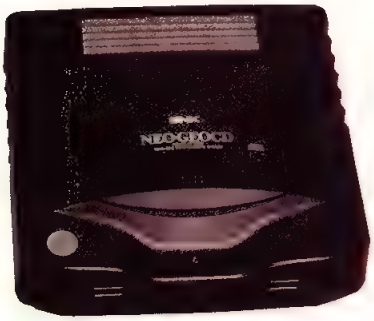
HIGHLANDER


BLUE LIGHTNING


VIRTUAL LIGHT MACHINE

Blast From the Past

SNK hope to come back into the home market with the Neo Geo CD. Can they?



The new joypad is superbly tactile and responsive.

Of course the old stick works with the new system.

The Neo Geo caused something of a stir when it was released almost five years ago in Japan. At the time, it was a super-powerful console, easily capable of matching arcade machines pixel for pixel, sprite for sprite. Unfortunately for Neo Geo, games have come on an awful long way since then. As a matter of fact, SNK's coin-ops are among the most dated-looking in arcades.

Neo Geo as a concept seemed watertight. An arcade machine in your own home, with games exactly the same as the ones you play in seedy coin-op parlors. The problem was that in order to achieve that level of performance, SNK had to fill the game cartridges with an awful lot of data. Nearly 300 Megs in some cases. Since cart prices are prohibitive anyway, Neo Geo became something of a rich man's plaything. Who can afford 300 bucks for a new game?

Well, the Neo Geo CD is finally here to address these criticisms, and with a US launch scheduled for late fall, it looks like the boys from SNK might finally make an impression in the USA.

SNK's plan is not to compete head-to-head with Saturn or PlayStation, but instead to concentrate on building up market share with the beat-'em-up audience. SNK beat-'em-ups are among the best in the arcades and have very faithful followers. SNK hopes to convince this group of people that the Neo Geo CD represents an affordable way to experience those games at home.

50 or 60 bucks for a CD version of **Fatal Fury** certainly sounds a lot more appealing than 200. The Neo Geo CD though, isn't just a Neo Geo with a CD drive. The console pretty much had to be remanufactured from scratch. Sure, the graphics and sound hardware still remain, but the main board had to be re-engineered completely.

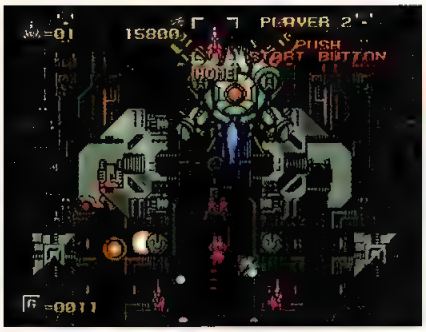
Basically, in order to play the games properly, the CD player has to dump most of the contents of the game into the Neo Geo CD's RAM. Since RAM is expensive, compromises had to be made. For one thing, the Neo Geo CD has a single-speed CD drive, and since the rest of its technology is old, it takes every game a fairly long time to load. OK, so in the scheme of things, a couple of minutes isn't such a bad thing, compared to say, an eternity in Hell. However, a couple of minutes is a hell of a long time if you're trying to browse through your Neo Geo collection. Just sampling a couple of games could take you half an hour.

It looked at one point like SNK were going to address this problem, by installing a double-speed drive in the US version of the machine, and while this is still a possibility, it looks pretty unlikely at this point. Fortunately, the agonizing wait times are eased somewhat by the happy spectacle of a juggling monkey. Were it not for the hilarious simian antics of juggling monkey boy, we may have gone insane waiting for **Art of Fighting 2** to load.

"There will never be a conversion of Mortal Kombat, Street Fighter or Doom"

The games themselves still hold up very well. Classic shooters like **Viewpoint** and **Last Resort** still look good, while sports fans have a fairly decent range to choose from. This machine is for the beat-'em-up fan though, and there are plenty of fighting games for the Neo Geo. One small problem. Since this is a relatively obscure machine, you'll probably never see a single conversion of a famous third-party title. Basically there will never be a conversion of **Mortal Kombat**, or **Street Fighter**, or **Doom**. This is an enthusiast's machine. A huge wealth of games, an awful lot of history and now, it looks like a reasonable price tag (of around $400) will finally launch the Neo Geo system into…well, into something, anyway.

Its appeal lies squarely in the eye of the Neo Geo fan who wants affordable software. As for mass market appeal, well, it may not stand a chance.



Alpha Mission 2 is one of the rare shooters on the Neo Geo.

Baseball Stars is possibly the best Baseball game around.

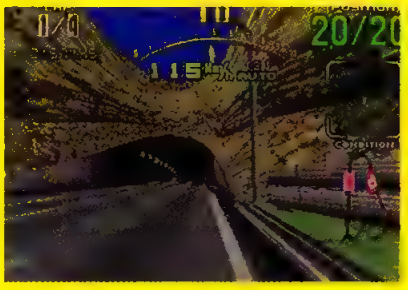
And of course, Samurai Shodown 2 is pretty typical of the fighting games.

The new identity features rather cracked-looking clown masks.

Like all the new consoles, this doubles as a nifty CD player.

Get used to it.

DAYTONA USA



Every race gets an action replay.

This is make-or-break for **Sega**. If **Daytona USA** doesn't shape up the way **Ridge Racer** did, then Sega could find themselves in a lot of trouble. This, in short, has to be their killer app. Converting what is probably the most complicated arcade game ever made to a home system is no mean feat, so it's fortunate that Sega decided to give the job to **AM2**, the arcade division that programmed the original coin-op.

Headed up by a gentleman named Yu Suzuki, AM2 has been responsible for Sega's cutting edge 3-D technology and their best coin-ops.

Daytona is in many ways a sequel to **Virtua Racer**, but this time featuring American heavy metal rather than the somewhat genteel sophistication of Formula One. This is real shake-and-bake, non-stop-action. As well as straightforward racing, there's also no shortage of aggressive, demolition-derby action.

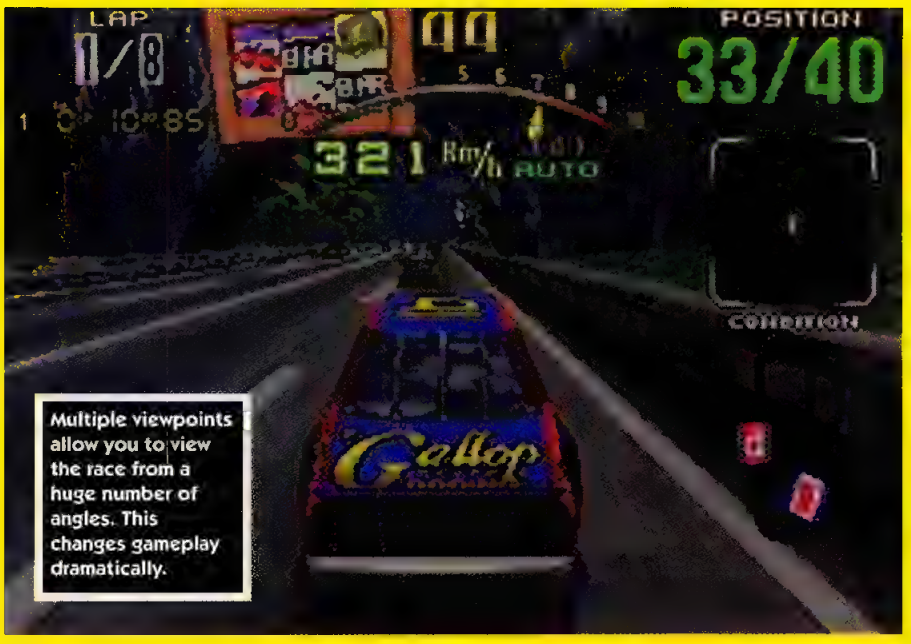
As a result, your car can get pretty beat up, affecting your performance, handling and speed. Fortunately you can slip sideways into the pit lane for a few repairs.

This adds a vital element of strategy to the otherwise simplistic fun, and in this respect at least, Daytona has a lot more to it than Ridge Racer. Graphically though, it still has a lot of catching up to do.

As you can see from the screenshots, most of the detail and resolution from the coin-op has been maintained, but unfortunately, at the cost of speed and fluidity. This runs (at the moment) at a frame-rate that certainly looks about half as smooth as Ridge Racer. Sega still have time to clean it up, but even the finished version won't be up to anything like the 60 frames per second generated by the original arcade game.

In its defense though, it must be said that even early versions of Daytona USA play like a dream. The car handling and general control feel perfect, and the game has three tracks, exactly three times more

Smooth yes, but not as smooth as Ridge Racer.



Multiple viewpoints allow you to view the race from a huge number of angles. This changes gameplay dramatically.

than Ridge Racer. And they're big, complicated tracks too, with gorgeous backdrops and stunningly difficult turns.

The **Saturn** version is actually a bigger game than the arcade original, with a special Saturn mode allowing you to select more options. 3-D fans will also be pleased to note that you can select those multiple viewpoints at will, moving from ground level to bird's-eye-view at the press of a button.

The fact that the tracks are so varied and complicated certainly gives Daytona more long-term appeal than Ridge Racer. It should take a while to get bored of this, even if you are disappointed by the graphics. Actually, that's unfair. Although this isn't as silky-smooth as Namco's Racer, it certainly looks better than anything you might have seen even on a high-end PC.

And the wealth of options mean that you can customize a lot of settings to suit yourself. But there is one almighty "Doh!" that really should have been addressed. No two-player option.

Ridge Racer had the same problem and yet both PlayStation and Saturn have support for linking machines. Sega still have time to include a link feature, but it's doubtful that they will. So sadly, Daytona USA, which is one of the very best multi-player experiences ever programmed, will be limited to a one-player game.

There's no doubt at all that this is more involving than Ridge Racer, and arcade pundits (certainly in Japan) will insist that it's a better game overall, but graphically, this has a lot to prove, as so it seems, does the Saturn.

—Frank O' Connor

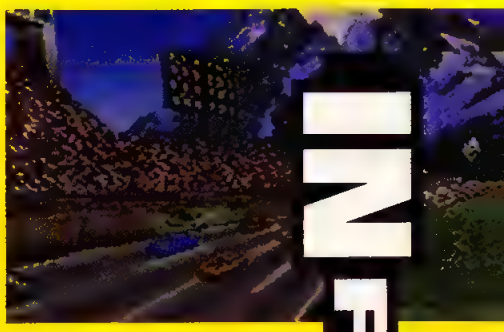
The CD music is absolutely arcade-perfect.

STRENGTHS

- The biggest arcade game of all
- All the arcade features
- Great options

WEAKNESSES

- Slightly jerky graphics
- Weird, cheesy music
- Difficult pad control



INFO

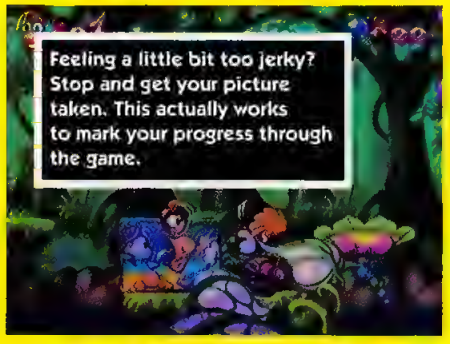
Game:	Daytona USA
Format:	Saturn CD
Publisher:	Sega
Game Style:	Driving
Completion Status:	70%
Release date:	September 2nd
Price:	TBA

RAYMAN

There haven't exactly been a whole helluva lot of games that have exploited the **Jaguar**'s full 64-bits of power. **Tempest 2000**, **A.V.P.**, and **Doom** have been, quite honestly, the only real examples of the new Atari "math", and the only real reasons to consider buying a Jag. We know that the machine is capable of amazing things and garbage like **Air Cars** just isn't going to cut it. Fortunately, every now and then, along comes a game that just grabs you by the testes and says, "I know you wanna play me!".

Yeah, there's nothing quite like getting some new powers from a fairy. Wait a minute, what am I saying?!!

Rayman, from **Ubi Soft**, says all this and a whole lot more. The first thing that gets your attention is the game's strongest asset—its graphics. Every square inch of the screen is packed with vivid, mind-blowing color. Seeing the graphics for the first time made me realize what it must've looked like to Dorothy when she opened that door in **The Wizard of Oz**; they're really gorgeous. The frame-rate of the on-screen characters is astounding. Running at more than 60 frames per second, the animation in Rayman is truly a testament to Ubi Soft's commitment to excellence.



Feeling a little bit too jerky? Stop and get your picture taken. This actually works to mark your progress through the game.

Rayman's play-mechanics are also definitely worth mentioning. At first, you're given no offensive powers whatsoever; you're forced to simply jump and run to avoid enemies. At various stages in the game, however, you earn advanced powers from helpful characters like fairies and aliens and the like. The telescoping fist is the first weapon provided and allows you to pummel enemies into oblivion with short and long-range punches. Helicopter-powered hair is another great ability and lets you hover out of trouble or into areas otherwise unreachable.

This game's got a lot going for it, and the fact that it will be released soon for the Jaguar is even more good news. It looks as if this game will finally give Atari's big cat some claws.

—Jim Loftus

INFO

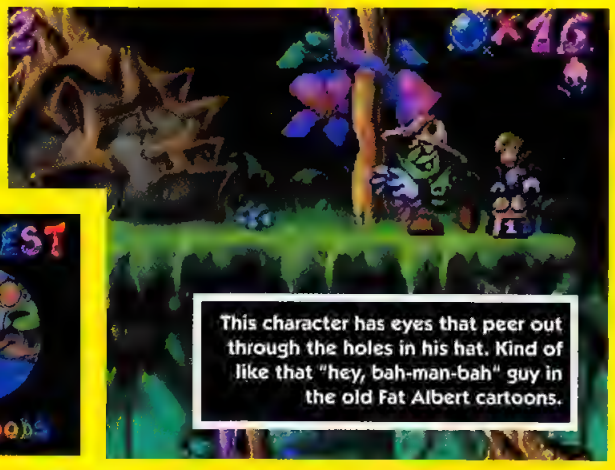
Game:	Rayman
Format:	Jaguar
Publisher:	Ubi Soft
Game Style:	Action/Platform
Completion Status:	95%
Release date:	April
Price:	TBA

STRENGTHS

- Unbelievably beautiful graphics
- Interesting, original characters
- Control is near to perfection

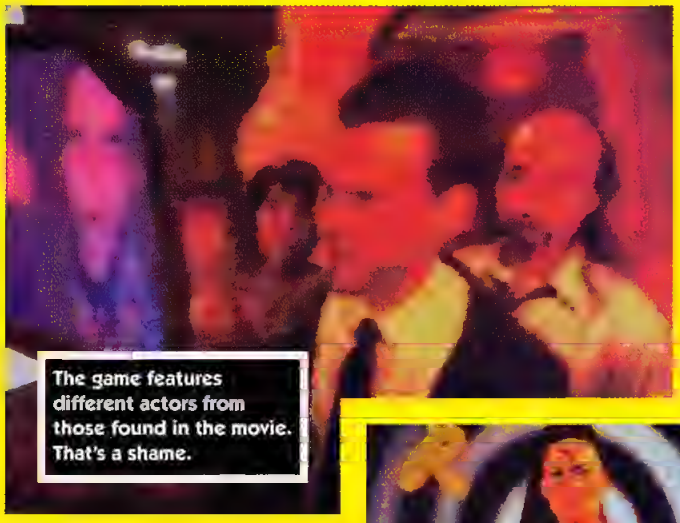
WEAKNESSES

- Not much use of multi-parallax
- Music is slightly lame-o
- More secret areas would be nice



This character has eyes that peer out through the holes in his hat. Kind of like that "hey, bah-man-bah" guy in the old Fat Albert cartoons.

JOHNNY MNEMONIC



The game features different actors from those found in the movie. That's a shame.

The dark atmosphere of the movie is perfectly conveyed in good quality FMV. Cool soundtrack too.

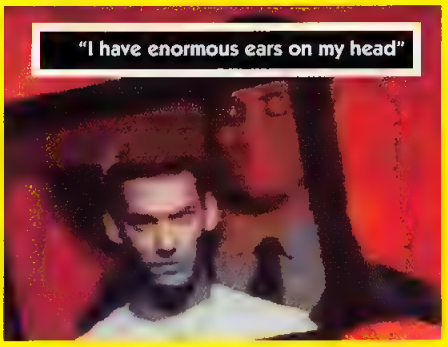
Johnny Mnemonic is the first truly successful marriage of movie and game, incorporating the best aspects of each to provide a watershed action experience that beats the hell out of games like **Dragon's Lair** and leaves them languishing in the gutter gargling cyber-blood.

The plot of Johnny Mnemonic is appropriately complex. Suffice it to say it involves microchips implanted in brains, a nasty **Blade Runner**-esque future and bad guys with never-ending clips of bullets. You watch this beautifully dark, real-time video movie (often filmed from character points of view) and are given frequent chances to alter its course by deciding in what directions protagonist Johnny will move, what tools he'll use and what things he'll investigate close-up. Instead of relying on bulky arrows or freeze-framing, you're prompted into action with "Windows of Opportunity," during which the full-screen video switches to "letterbox" format. Action is time-based and panic-fast—the cuts between different video clips are immediate, and if you don't choose a direction within split-seconds the video randomly progresses on its own. Certain plot elements are also randomized with each play—a window used for escape purposes in one game might be locked in the next.

Another amazing feature of this "game" is its quick and brutal interactive fight scenes, during which you spar using the refreshingly straightforward commands, "kick," "punch" or "block."

It's amazing how quickly you become Johnny, seemingly feeling every bone-crunching blow to his head, and personally experiencing his sense of paranoia. As a movie, Johnny Mnemonic would be an entertaining watch; as a game, it's an entertaining play. In this format it's something even better than the sum of its parts.

—Dan Vebber



"I have enormous ears on my head"

STRENGTHS

- Gorgeous, gritty movie-quality video.
- Truly interactive fight scenes.
- Random plot means big replay value.

WEAKNESSES

- Different viewpoints are confusing.
- The future looks depressing as hell.
- "Virtual Land" is reminiscent of Tron.

INFO

Game:	Johnny Mnemonic
Format:	PC CD-ROM, Mac CD, Sega CD
Publisher:	Sony Imagesoft
Game Style:	Interactive Video
Completion Status:	85%
Release date:	May
Price:	TBA

STREET FIGHTER THE MOVIE

Could it be that there are simply too many **Street Fighter** games? Have Capcom gone too far this time? They're about to unleash three new Street Fighter titles on an unsuspecting public, but **Street Fighter: the Movie** is probably the most important.

Although this will eventually debut as a an arcade machine, the version shown here is the PlayStation and Saturn game. Both are virtually identical, with tiny differences in sound and resolution. As a game though, it plays pretty much the same way on either machine.

Make no mistake about it, this is Street Fighter with digitized graphics. The combos are there, almost all of the moves remain identical and the game still has the same, slick, six-button set up. If you're looking for something new, then it looks like you may be a little disappointed.

Having said that, Street Fighter fans are always happy to see more of the same. Capcom have sold millions of Street Fighter games on exactly that principle, and this could be the fighting game to watch on 32-bit platforms.

The digitized sprites do add a much needed hard edge to the proceedings.

Digitized actors make a welcome change from cartoon sprites and blocky graphics.

I think Ryu has a fireball in mind.

Many players have complained in the past that the Street Fighter games are too cartoony and that it can't match **Mortal Kombat** for atmosphere.

This new version addresses some of those problems and an all new soundtrack is a much needed addition. The animation, as you'd expect from a 32-bit machine, is fluid, smooth and convincing. The characters look good against the backdrops and the whole effect is very different from the previous games.

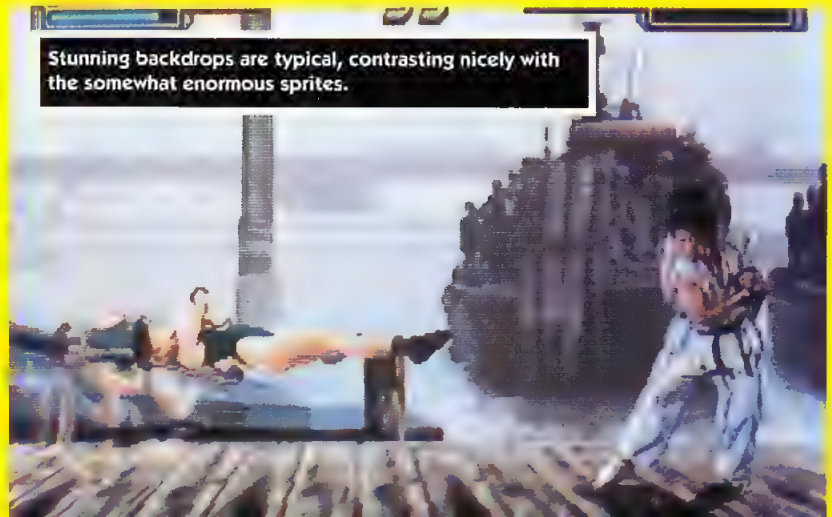
Capcom also have **Darkstalkers** lined up for PlayStation and Saturn, but we suspect that this game will be more welcome. Capcom's recent move to super-cartoony

STRENGTHS

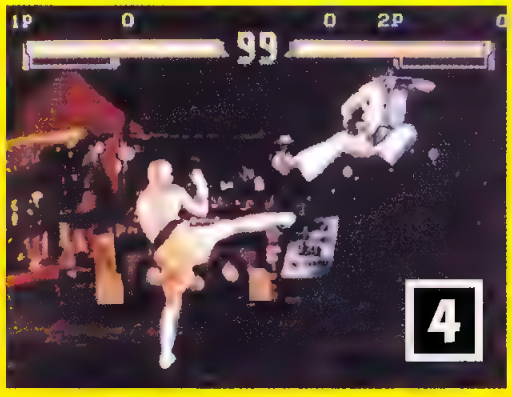
- Graphics are gorgeous
- Cool, violent sound effects
- Classic gameplay

WEAKNESSES

- It's all been done before
- Yet another Street Fighter game
- Odd-looking sprites



Stunning backdrops are typical, contrasting nicely with the somewhat enormous sprites.

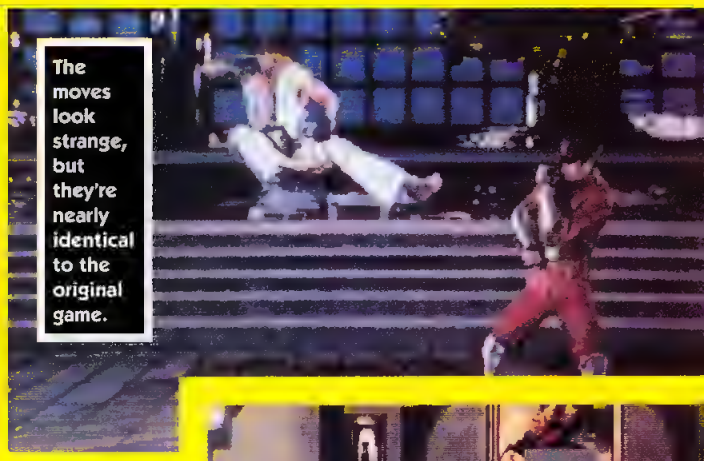


1 Balrog (Vega's Japanese name) shows Ryu how to rinse after you brush. Hardy har har.

2 Cammy shows M. Bison something much more interesting, if a little dangerous.

3 Jean Claude Van Damme does the splits, again. He always does that; it's boring now.

4 Sagat and Ryu re-enact their favorite scenes from SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER.



The moves look strange, but they're nearly identical to the original game.

graphics—in the arcades at least—seems to fly in the face of current gaming logic. Which brings us to another point. Capcom also have a game lined up for arcades called **Street Fighter Legends**, featuring the characters from the very first Street Fighter game, like Birdie, Eagle and Adon.

This is great for crusty old gamers, but younger players might be confused by the whole business. The game itself looks very much like **Darkstalkers** and the upcoming **Darkstalkers 2**.

Hmm. Wait a minute. This is an awful lot of fighting games for one company to be releasing at the same time. If only they had some other ideas up their sleeves. Well, the good news is that they do. Capcom are currently hard at work on a 3-D racing game, something they haven't really done before. It's also rumored that this 3-D technology will be used for, you guessed it, **Street Fighter 3-D**.

Yes, it will probably look something like **Toh Shin Den**, or **Virtua Fighter 2**, but knowing Capcom and the Street Fighter gameplay, it might just be enough to blow the competition away. But please Capcom, no more Street Fighter games, we just can't take it any more.

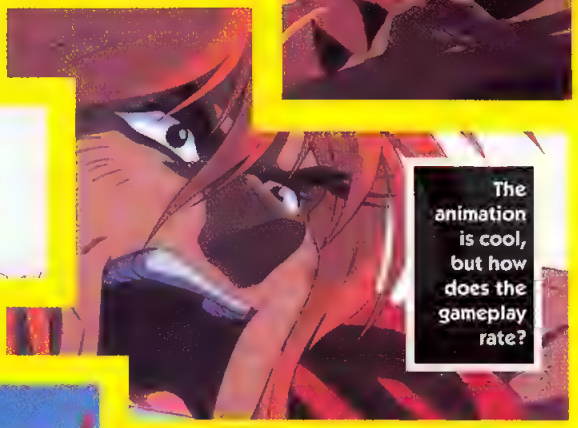
—Frank O'Connor

INFO

Game:	Street Fighter the Movie
Format:	Playstation/Saturn
Publisher:	Capcom
Game Style:	Fighting
Completion Status:	90%
Release date:	TBA
Price:	TBA

STREET FIGHTER ANIMATED MOVIE

Balrog is one ugly fella, even as a cartoon.


The animation is cool, but how does the gameplay rate?

About a year ago, **Street Fighter**, the animated movie was released in Japan. It was a pretty big success. The Street Fighter characters are extremely well suited to this kind of movie and it all made perfect sense.

Another thing that makes perfect sense is the game of the movie. Capcom have taken much of the animation from the movie and slotted it in and around a rather innovative action RPG.

Although many of the graphics will seem familiar to fans of the Anime version, there's a lot of new stuff in this, and it's probably one of the best-looking games you're ever likely to see.

Details on gameplay are scarce at the moment, but expect this to be a cross between a conventional RPG and something like **Dragon's Lair**. The game will debut in Japan around summer, but expect to see the American version around Christmas.

Although this will debut on **Saturn** and **PlayStation**, a **3DO** version is also in development, and it should be pretty close to the other versions.

This kind of game is very easy to port across to any CD platform, but both Saturn and PlayStation have excellent decompression facilities, making the process a lot simpler. The name of the game has yet to be chosen, but this is number three in a series of Street Fighter games Capcom will unveil later this year. As yet, there's no sign of the much-vaunted **Street Fighter 3**, but I'm confident that they'll get around to it sooner or later.

—Dan Vebber

INFO

Game:	Street Fighter Anime Movie
Format:	Playstation/Saturn
Publisher:	Capcom
Game Style:	RPG
Completion Status:	60%
Release date:	TBA
Price:	TBA

Nasty Spaniard Vega prepares to kick some ass.

Sagat has never looked meaner or better.

STRENGTHS

- Wonderful cartoon graphics
- Movie-perfect soundtrack
- Innovative game design

WEAKNESSES

- Another Street Fighter game
- Linear gameplay
- Lots of repetition

BLACKFIRE

Gouraud-shaded landscapes fly past at a phenomenal rate.

One thing the **Saturn** ought to be good at is 3-D flight sims. As a matter of fact, **Sega** already has a conversion of their arcade hit **Wing War** in the works. **Blackfire**, however, should give drooling Saturn flight fans something to tide them over until it arrives. Strictly speaking, this isn't a true sim. As a matter of fact, anyone who really flew like this would immediately be banned from ever boarding an aircraft again. This is an action game, no mess, no fuss, no waste. Just lots of fast, furious fighting fun.

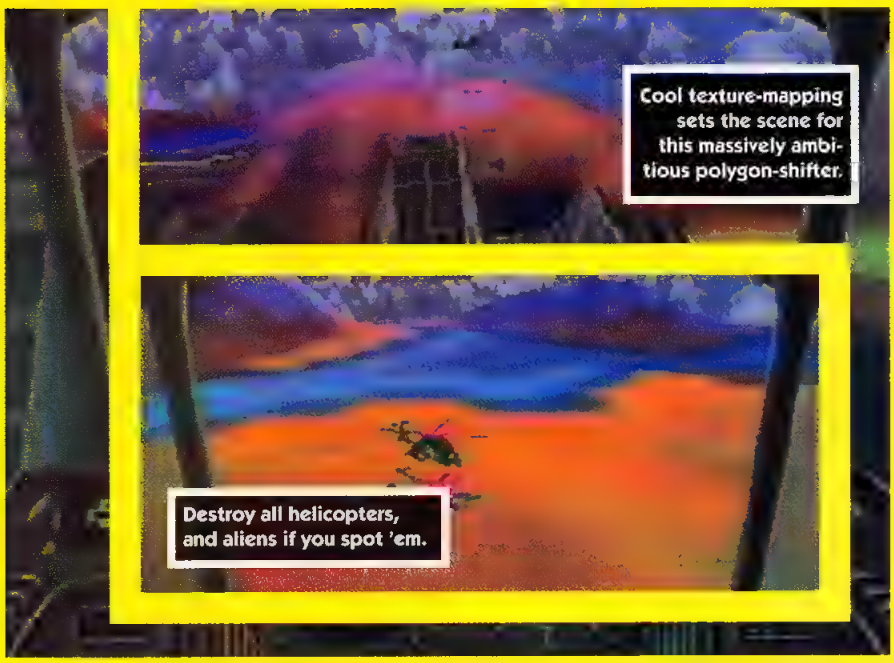
In many ways, this resembles 3DO games like **Shock Wave** and **Total Eclipse**, and graphically, it's pretty similar too. The difference is that the Saturn's beefy hardware allows for some very pretty Gouraud shading and lightning-fast texture-mapping.

As with most games of this type, you have a variety of weapons at your disposal, including laser guns and more powerful missiles. The ground-based and airborne enemy provide a heck of a challenge, and the game is split into distinct missions.

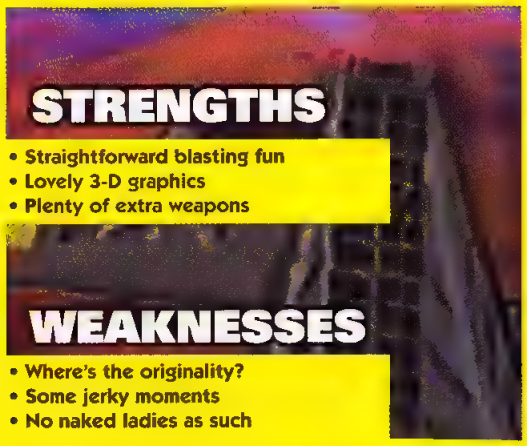
Blackfire also has the distinction of a raucous CD soundtrack, backed up by some pretty harrowing sound effects. At the moment though, it looks like the Saturn's awesome sound chip is being badly underused. Programmers complain that chip music uses too much processing time, as well as taking up valuable RAM.

Anyone expecting a rival to Microsoft's **Flight Simulator** will be disappointed, but blood-crazed, barking mad kamikaze pilots should enjoy the scenario.

—Chris Gore


Cool texture-mapping sets the scene for this massively ambitious polygon-shifter.

Destroy all helicopters, and aliens if you spot 'em.

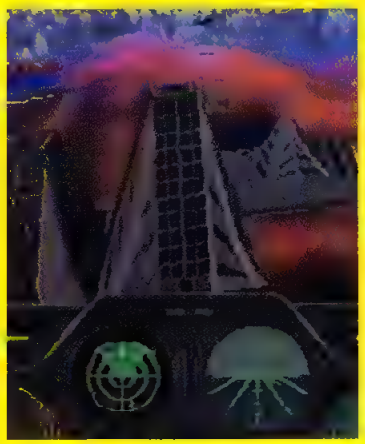


STRENGTHS

- Straightforward blasting fun
- Lovely 3-D graphics
- Plenty of extra weapons

WEAKNESSES

- Where's the originality?
- Some jerky moments
- No naked ladies as such



INFO

Game:	Blackfire
Format:	Sega Saturn
Publisher:	Sega
Game Style:	Arcade/Sim
Completion Status:	60%
Release Date:	September
Price:	TBA

VIRTUA RACING

Arcades owe an awful lot to **Sega**. Their combination of cool gameplay and innovative hardware makes them the world's number-one manufacturer of coin-ops. Strange, then, that they gave the **Saturn** conversion to **Time Warner**.

Although no official explanation is available, it appears that Sega want to concentrate on their more up-to-date, texture-mapped stuff, and are moving away from conventional polygons.

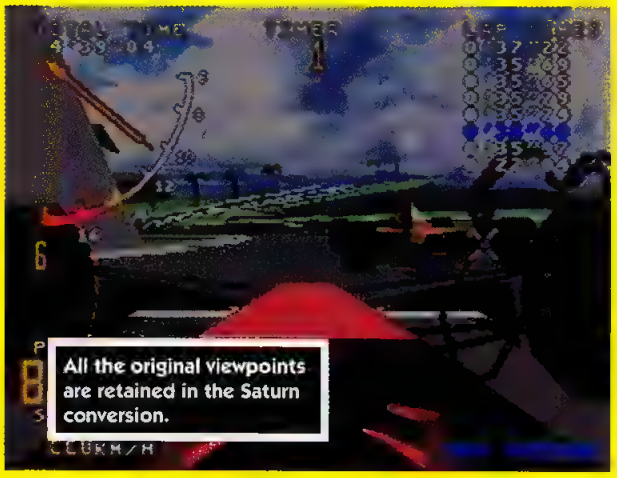
This conversion has been handled by the kind folks at Time Warner, and they appear to have made a pretty good job of it. As a matter of fact, they've made quite a lot of improvements over the original arcade game. There are new tracks, more cars, and we're told, a few hidden secrets to be found. Sadly though, one thing that hasn't been improved is the frame-rate. The graphics are nowhere near as smooth as those of the arcade game. Although the Saturn is perfectly capable of handling a cleaner conversion, Time Warner don't seem to have pulled it off.

In terms of playability though, this has everything racing fans could ever need. A two-player, split-screen racing mode, and plenty of other options.

Until **Daytona** finally shows up, this could be the Saturn racing game to watch. But there is the danger that Daytona could overshadow this.

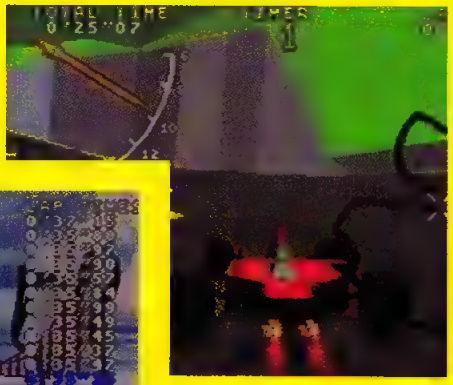
—Frank O'Connor

Boxy polygon cars look strange.


All the original viewpoints are retained in the Saturn conversion.

INFO

Game:	Virtua Racing
Format:	Sega Saturn
Publisher:	Time Warner
Game Style:	Driving
Completion Status:	80%
Release date:	September
Price:	TBA

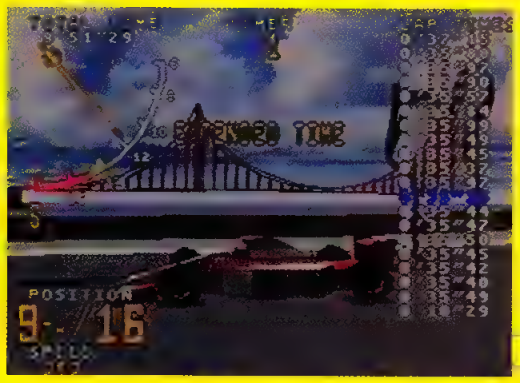


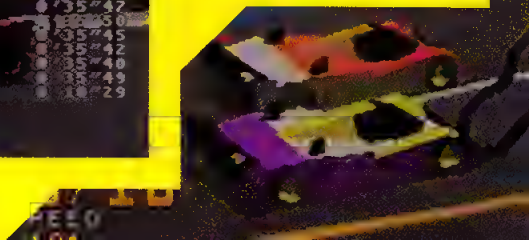
STRENGTHS

- Classic racing gameplay
- Intense two-player mode
- Loads of options

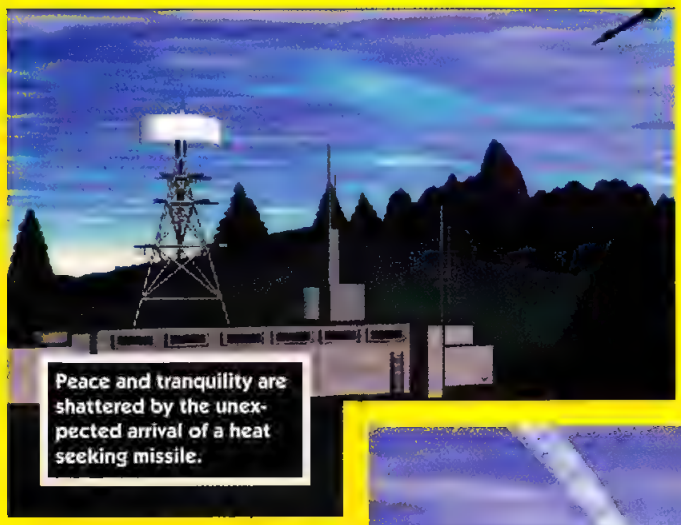
WEAKNESSES

- Blocky polygons
- Surprisingly jerky graphics
- Weak soundtrack

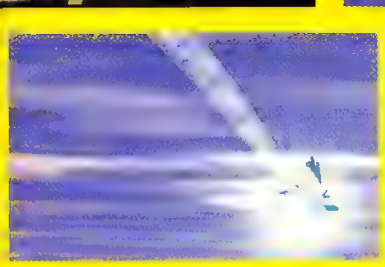


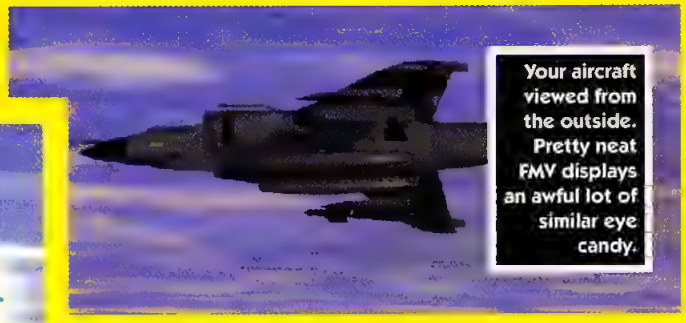


FLYING NIGHTMARE



Peace and tranquility are shattered by the unexpected arrival of a heat seeking missile.





Your aircraft viewed from the outside. Pretty neat FMV displays an awful lot of similar eye candy.

Flying Nightmare has proved something of a sleeper hit on home computer formats, with the **Macintosh** and **Power PC** versions having had a particularly good run of success.

This success can be largely attributed to the fact that while Flying Nightmare is detailed, much of the tedious nature of normal flight sims has been replaced with fast action. There are an awful lot of things to shoot out of the sky. As well as a number of bad guys to take out on sea and land. And on **3DO**, largely thanks to the simplistic controllers, this has even more of an arcade feel than the previous versions.

Flying Nightmare puts you in charge of a Navy jet, and indeed the first mission starts on an aircraft carrier, something you will come to call home, shortly after you call it a bastard.

The aircraft in question is a Harrier and even taking off is a pretty tricky business. Once airborne however, you'll have a whale of a time, looping, barrel rolling and crashing into innocent civilian property.

It comes as something of a surprise to learn that the 3DO still really hasn't had a proper flight simulator, and although Flying Nightmare makes a few compromises, it definitely offers the best flying experience so far.

Arcade fans should probably take to this very easily too. The gameplay is straightforward, the action is simple and the visual and aural effects are glorious; enough to keep anybody happy.

Domark look like they could be a force to watch on the 32-bit scene, and let's hope they produce more stuff of this quality for PlayStation and Saturn. This new technology is incredibly exciting and at last the games are finally starting to take advantage of that fact. Bigger, better-looking and more playable—what more could you ask for?

—Frank O'Connor

Keeeeerrrrblllaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaam!

STRENGTHS

- Amazing rendered 3-D graphics.
- Good use of 3DO hardware.
- Complicated, difficult missions.

WEAKNESSES

- Too much time spent on intros.
- 3DO controller is pretty limited.
- Lacking that all important fluidity.

INFO

Game:	Flying Nightmare
Format:	3DO
Publisher:	Domark
Game Style:	Action Flight Sim
Completion Status:	85%
Release date:	June
Price:	TBA

BUG!

Bug wanders forward, into the screen.

The graphics are silky smooth throughout.

Yeeuch! Filthy, unhygienic, nasty, skittering bugs. They live in the dark corners of your house, they shit all over your food and they carry diseases. Yet **Sega** seem to think that bugs are a suitably cutesy mascot for their Saturn machine. Well, at least it's more realistic than a blue hedgehog.

Bug! it must be said, is a pretty revolutionary platform game, allowing you to move in three dimensions, as well as incorporating all the standard platform features you've come to know and love.

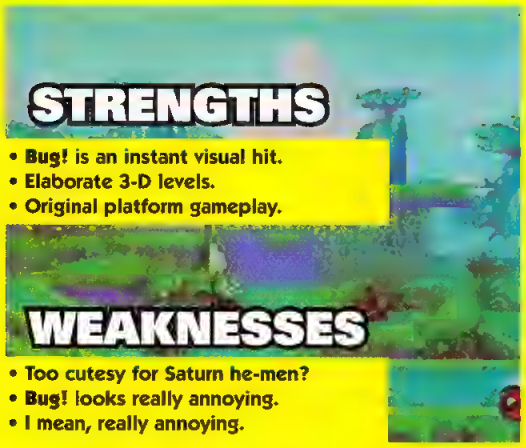
The smooth scrolling, power-ups and wacky music have all been done before, but the eponymous Bug can also move in and out of the screen, making full use of the Saturn's awesome 3D capabilities.

Sprite scaling also plays a big part, with bad guys moving smoothly and quickly from background to foreground, all of which manages to make Bug! something of a visual feast. Quite unlike any platformer you've ever seen.

Although it remains to see how Bug! actually plays, this marks something of a renaissance for platform games, with **Clockwork Knight** and **Shinobi X** also vying for the crown. Looking good.

—Frank O' Connor

Scaled sprites add to the feeling of depth.

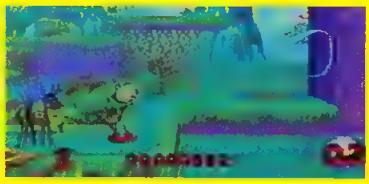


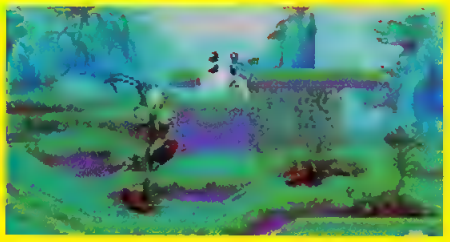
STRENGTHS

- **Bug! is an instant visual hit.**
- **Elaborate 3-D levels.**
- **Original platform gameplay.**

WEAKNESSES

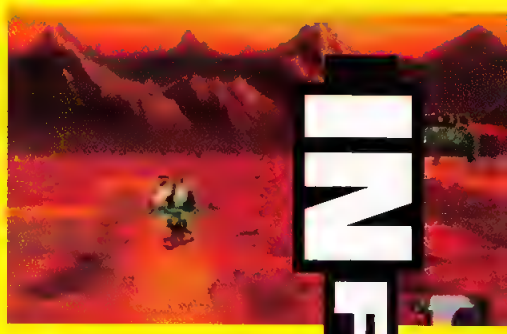
- **Too cutesy for Saturn he-men?**
- **Bug! looks really annoying.**
- **I mean, really annoying.**





Actually, he is kind of cute, in a sickly, demented way.

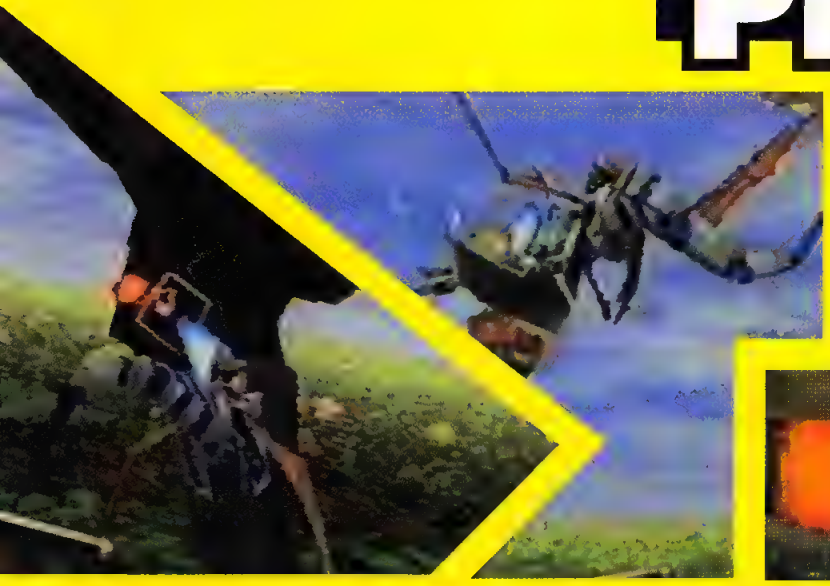
The 3-D levels are complicated and challenging; this is a map-maker's dream come true.



INFO

Game:	Bug!
Format:	Sega Saturn
Publisher:	Sega
Game Style:	Platform
Completion Status:	60%
Release date:	September
Price:	TBA

PANZER DRAGOON



A wonderful sense of realism is generated by the smooth graphics.

Now if this game was a girl, it would be Claudia Schiffer, only it probably wouldn't end up married to a creepy, weird, tan-having Las Vegas magician. It would however be as sexy as hell, as indeed it is.

Panzer Dragoon has been in development for well over a year and that commitment is now paying off. This is the **Saturn** game to watch. It's actually smoother than **Daytona** and **Starwing** fans will climb over each other to play it. It's one of the most impressive shooters yet, and certainly the best-looking Saturn game I've seen so far.

Diving under a bridge to avoid death.

Full-motion video looks great and adds to the action.

You control a huge dragon and his gun-toting rider as they soar through a fantasy world filled with mythical creatures. This world is also filled with fabulous graphics and one of the best game soundtracks I've ever heard. Gameplay, control and atmosphere are stunning. It's a basic shooter, but homing missiles, power-ups and staggering bosses separate it from the crowd.

One thing that's very impressive about Panzer Dragoon is the intelligent loading; the gap between levels is almost unnoticeable.

Panzer Dragoon is truly involving, allowing you to become utterly absorbed in its massively unlikely scenario. Sega might do better to concentrate on this rather than **Daytona** as their killer app. Panzer, more than any other Saturn title will help sell machines and we can't wait for a finished American copy.

—Dan Vebber

STRENGTHS

- Wonderful, smooth graphics.
- Astounding orchestral soundtrack.
- Simple, classic gameplay.

WEAKNESSES

- Very linear game structure.
- Confusing, crowded battles.
- It's really scary.

INFO

Game:	Panzer Dragoon
Format:	Sega Saturn
Publisher:	Sega
Game Style:	Action/Arcade
Completion Status:	90%
Release date:	September
Price:	TBA

THUNDER IN PARADISE

Mmmmm. Speedboats, blond mustaches and glorious sunsets.

Hulk Hogan is probably the best actor the world has ever seen. His range and scope separate him from the banal crowd of Hollywood wannabes. Not since Elliot Gould has an actor had so much presence, style and variety. Actually I'm lying. However, Mr. Hogan is a big, jolly, affable fellow and he's the proud possessor of a very nice moustache.

Hello, my name is Hulk Hogan, and I'm friendly.

Hulk gets involved in some Kung Fu action.

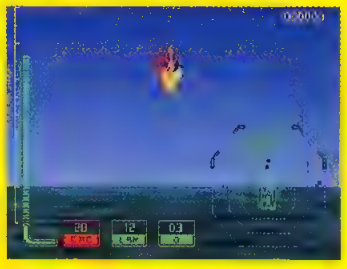
Thunder in Paradise is a networked TV show featuring Hulk in a variety of beach-related adventures. And it's...erm...it's very interesting stuff.

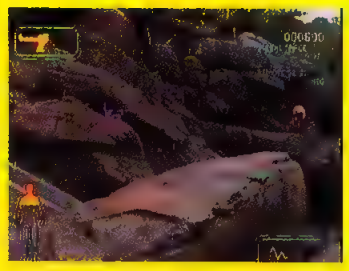
Philips obviously feel this is ideal fodder for a game conversion, and Thunder in Paradise is indeed a game, of sorts. The gameplay is split into a number of weird sub-games, **Operation Wolf**-style shooting, a spot of speedboat driving and a couple of puzzles.

Every time you complete a sub-game, a full-motion video sequence leads you on to the next game section. Thunder in Paradise is all about graphics. The full-motion video sets are nice-looking, and some of the later games actually use the CD-i's not inconsiderable graphic capabilities properly.

This is a product very much aimed at the younger audience that actually watches the program. In fact in many respects, this title is pretty unsuitable for adults. It looks nice though.

—Frank O'Connor





A huge cyborg targets one of Hulk's little pals.

STRENGTHS

- Great Full Motion Video
- Lots of variety
- Slick options

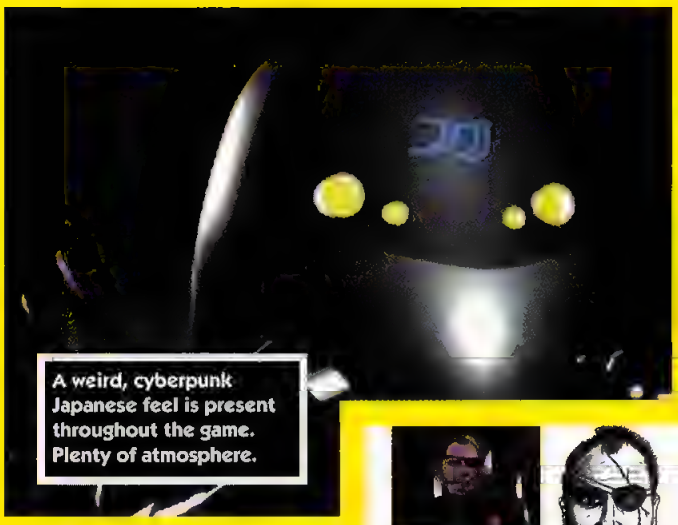
WEAKNESSES

- Weak sub games
- Interesting acting
- Difficult pad control

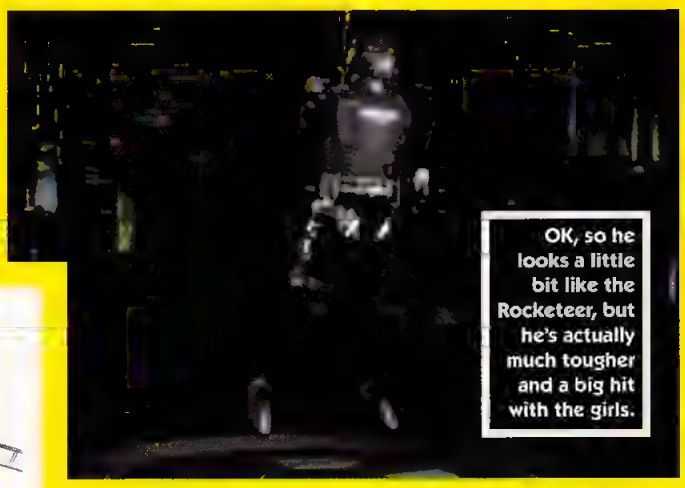
INFO

Game:	Thunder in Paradise
Format:	Philips CD-i
Publisher:	Philips
Game Style:	FMV action
Completion Status:	90%
Release date:	June
Price:	TBA

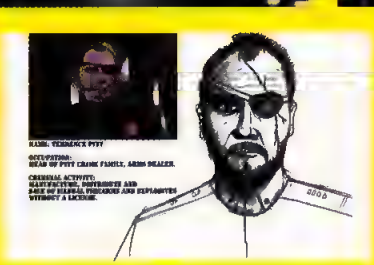
BLADEFORCE



A weird, cyberpunk Japanese feel is present throughout the game. Plenty of atmosphere.



OK, so he looks a little bit like the Rocketeer, but he's actually much tougher and a big hit with the girls.



Remember when you were a kid, you assumed the day would come when you'd be able to fly to school by strapping on a jet-pack? Sure you do. Now that the future has arrived, you're probably adult enough to admit that's never going to happen. But thanks to the folks at 3DO, you can certainly settle for the next best thing.

BladeForce blazes an impressive new trail for flying games by allowing the player to move in six dimensions. (For those who had trouble in geometry, that equals 100 percent control over all movement: left, right; up, down; forward, back.)

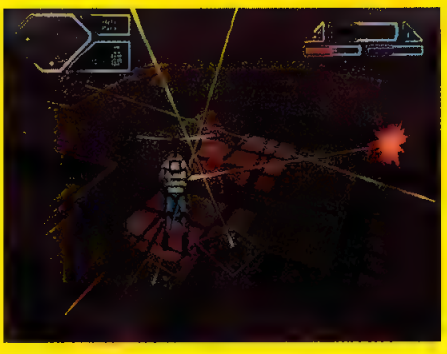
Instead of being confined to a jet, which can only move forward, players of BladeForce control a character who's strapped with weapons and decked out in a "Personal HeliPak Flight Suit." It's up to you to soar around a typically decrepit future city, blowing away members of an evil street gang and capturing their leaders to ensure a better tomorrow for all the world's children. Admittedly not the most unique sci-fi premise, but surprisingly well-realized here.

There are seven different worlds to conquer, all overflowing with individual 3-D objects to annihilate. Movement in these areas has its limits (you can't fly above the clouds, and touching the ground will damage you and your equipment), but because BladeForce isn't limited to a rear-view of a plane or other vehicle, the overall illusion of flight is undeniably effective. Succumbing to gravity and diving toward the ground is especially stomach-tickling.

You could compare this to **Descent**, a popular shooter on the PC, but this has more differences than similarities. The movement and controls are undoubtedly very similar, but this is an altogether less restrictive, less claustrophobic experience.

It has been described as **Doom** in the air, but those comparisons are beginning to sound tired. You can't describe every single 3-D shooter as a Doom clone. 3-D is a big part of gaming these days and if anything, it's going to get even bigger. New hardware makes the whole process a great deal simpler and more convincing. The role-playing experience is moving closer to reality.

—Dan Vebber

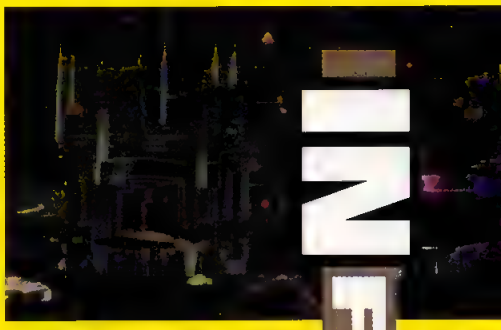


STRENGTHS

- Six directions of movement.
- Cool science-fiction plot.
- Excellent cinematic intros.

WEAKNESSES

- Disappointingly jerky 3-D routines.
- Levels look too similar.
- Gameplay can be repetitive.



INFO

Game:	BladeForce
Format:	3DO
Publisher:	3DO
Game Style:	Flying
Completion Status:	90%
Release date:	July
Price:	$60

Arca

Fun and games in Reno

The American Coin Machine Expo in late March had companies from around the world flying, driving or walking to Reno to show off their latest additions to the field of coin-machine technology. Those who attended the expo were given a sneak preview of the latest advancements in bill changing mechanisms, air hockey tables and CD jukeboxes.

Oh, yeah—there were some videogames there, too.

If the ACME show was any indication, this year in arcade gaming will likely be defined by not one, but two beloved American pastimes: driving and fighting. The majority of the games being debuted had the player either sitting behind the wheel of a speeding car or engaged in deadly fisticuffs with an over-muscled freak of nature. Games with cute cartoon characters were few and far between, and platform games were virtually non-existent.

The new games may be similar on a conceptual level, but that isn't to say the companies haven't been busy developing their product. Years ago, most driving games played virtually identically save for

the tracks being driven on, and most fighting games played virtually identically save for the look of the characters. But the games displayed at last month's expo proved that today, more than ever, companies are careful to include their own specific elements in each game; elements that insure the game will be totally unique within its driving or fighting genre.

In driving games, the trend was to use mechanical manipulation of realistic driver's seat environments to give the player the illusion of actually sitting behind the wheel of a car (or, in at least one case, atop a motorcycle). This mechanical manipulation ranged from the entire seat pitching and swaying in Namco's **Ace Driver** and **Cyber Cycles** to **Sega Rally**'s severe and surprisingly effective steering wheel jarring.

The "view change" button is another feature that has become all but standard issue for driving games. Most games featured at the expo gave players the option of choosing one of three road views, two of which show the car from the outside (either from a close-up or medium-shot distance), and one view from the driver's seat looking ahead through the windshield. The different views didn't have to be set before the game started, and could be easily toggled between at any point during the race.

Increased fluidity of motion is another trend evidenced by the driving games at the expo. By experimenting with the ratio of polygons to sprites, game designers have finally perfected stomach-churningly realistic motion. In the expo's best driving games, this motion is combined with enough detailed sprite-mapping to create backgrounds that fly by with all the realism of full-format video imagery.

Some new plane-driving (oh, OK, flying) games also made their first appearance at the expo, and are similar in many ways to the car-driving games. "View change" buttons on the plane games work exactly like those in their car-simulating counterparts, and the simulation of a cockpit environment through stereo sound, real-looking dashboard gauges and seemingly jet-ready seats was treated with even more attention to detail than were the driver's seat environments on the car-driving games.

As always, the new batch of fighting games are set apart from one another by different combat viewpoints, different

dia

artistic concepts, and different speeds and controls. But 32-bit processing has undeniably become the industry standard, meaning today's game designers have more tools at their disposal than ever before. Players have come to expect 3-D graphics and parallax scrolling, and the companies have no problem delivering them. But the fighting games displayed at the expo aren't just different because of the pictures they display; they're markedly different on a deep, playable level. Each fighting game utilizes a joystick in conjunction with at least three buttons, adding up to an effectively infinite array of punches, kicks, jumps, flips, blocking moves, special moves...suffice it to say that players who want to reserve some time in their schedule for eating, sleeping and living would be well-advised to concentrate on one game at a time.

As for this year's crop of bill collecting mechanisms, air hockey tables and CD jukeboxes, well, it was pretty much the same as last year.

Home systems get better and better, but the American Coin Machine Expo reaffirmed that there are still good reasons to shell out quarters in the arcade. The simple fact is, if it wasn't for arcades, we wouldn't have PlayStation, or Ultra 64. They are a constant source of innovate technology, concepts and ideas.

KOMBAT KRAZY

Certainly the most publicized aspect of the expo was the debut of Midway's third entry into its **Mortal Kombat** series. In **MK3**, players can choose from a minimum of 14 characters, including Kano and Sonya from the original **Mortal Kombat**, and Jax from **MKII**. New characters include robot ninjas Cyrax and Sektor, and Nightwolf, an Indian who wields a magical glowing tomahawk. Kombat takes place against at least 11 initial backdrops, including a graveyard, a

subway and an eerie "soul chamber."

The graphics are smoother than the previous two games, there are any number of new secret "finishing moves" and the addition of a "run" button to the control panel adds an entirely new element to the gameplay. But the most major change in **MK3** from the previous games is the appearance of a player-alterable code of six symbols at the beginning of the game. Depending on how the code is arranged, gameplay will proceed according to up to one million different sets of parameters. Midway is extensively marketing the game, and will utilize these codes in their print ads, television commercials and in an upcoming **Mortal Kombat** movie.

Finishing moves look to be even more brutal than in the previous games. Among those being displayed at the expo were a character strapping a time-bomb to his victim's chest, and another digging down his victim's throat to rip out the intact skeleton.

So all in all the game is just as brutal as its two predecessors and easily as much fun. More importantly, this game gives arcade owners something like a license to print money. When people go into arcades to play one game, they also spend money on all the other games, so a big hit like this is good for everybody. **Mortal Kombat** is by no means original, but I'll put money on it cleaning up.

ACE DRIVER

Namco's entry into the driving games category sends players racing around a downtown track in one of three (player's choice) souped-up, low-to-the-ground formula racecars. **Ace Driver** is a standard lap racing game, although a six-speed manual transmission (including a displayed tachometer) makes for unusually challenging speed-ups and slow-downs.

The most impressive visuals are of the cars themselves, and most players will probably opt to use the "view change" button to keep the car front-and-center on the screen. The track flies past so quickly, the game's occasional boxy background elements aren't a problem. Still, **Ace Driver** suffers from the problem of all lap games: driving around the same track multiple times, viewing essentially the same visuals over and over, tends to get tedious. Overall, the graphics are impressive enough to pass muster, but nothing revolutionary.

What is revolutionary, however, is the near-perfect synchronization between the action on the screen and the mechanical pitching of the player's seat. Every movement, from the tiniest of course corrections to slamming through a wall, is reflected by the seat with incredible realism.The motor system installed beneath **Ace Driver**'s seat is the strongest—and certainly quickest—I've ever experienced. This may sound like something your grandma would say, but I actually walked away from the game feeling carsick.

CYBER CYCLES

Past cycle games have had players sit on an actual motorcycle-type seat, but **Cyber Cycles** actually uses the seat as a controller. Steering is accomplished not by turning the handlebars, but by leaning from side to side, pulling the entire seat assemblage along with you. The result is interesting (and pretty close to riding a real motorcycle), if a little difficult to control.

Players are given two courses to choose from, both replete with jumps, hairpin turns and any number of other obstacles that would force a real-life, non-cyber cyclist to wipe out messily. The visual elements are all above average, mainly because of the game's numerous hills, bumps and jumps. Throughout the game play, the up/down movement is almost as abundant as left/right movement.

Better than the graphics, though, is the game's sound. The deafening growl accompanying each rev of the handgrip is more convincing than any flat television image could ever be.

Rounding out the game's features is the ability to choose one of three motorcycles to race with, each with its own specific balance, speed and handling. The most advanced of the three, the Exploder, is a Harley-Davidson look-alike driven by a leather-clad Hell's Angel. He's one scary character, but for only 50¢, any wimp can control his destiny.

Sega

Easily the most impressive of the expo's driving games, **Sega Rally** provides an amazing feeling of movement through deft allocation of picture-perfect graphics, thundering sound and bone-shaking mechanics.

Players choose one of four rally cars to race on a number of increasingly treacherous roads, from desert to forest to mountain. The backgrounds are movie-quality in their smoothness and random elements, and the polygon-based cars spin in three dimensions as they fly over huge jumps and often onto embankments. Up/down movement is prominent throughout the game, and is displayed with roller-coaster intensity.

As on the other driving games, viewpoints can be instantly changed with the push of a button, and a

...ep

Rally

nice wide rear-view mirror makes it easy to keep track of the competition. Players choose between manual or 4-speed automatic transmission, both of which can be a help or hindrance, depending on the course.

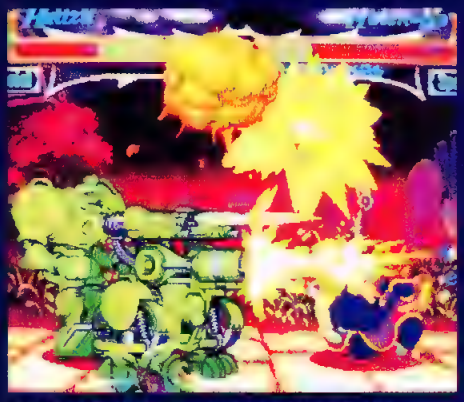
Rather than mechanically moving the player's entire seat, Sega designers built strong, jerking resistance into the steering wheel. This trick works better than might be imagined, with every minor pothole registering as a bump in the wheel, and every post-jump landing nearly spinning the wheel out of the player's hands.

Sega Rally was displayed in both a standard-sized cabinet version and in a sit-down, large-screen version. Do yourself a favor and seek out the latter.

DarkStalkers 2

Capcom's reputation has taken quite a beating over the last couple of years, largely thanks to their almost complete inability to produce anything other than a **Street Fighter** clone. Can you imagine the scene over at Capcom's research and development lab? Chief designer is ordered to produce say, a driving game, and spends the whole of the next three months figuring out how in the hell a car can do a Dragon punch.

DarkStalkers was another case in point. Original characters, influenced by famous movie monsters. A distinct graphical style, but you guessed it, all the **Street Fighter** moves were there, almost to the letter. It should come as no surprise then, to learn that **DarkStalkers 2** is even more of the same, only this time borrowing elements from the latest in the **SF2** series, **Super Street Fighter Turbo**. All the old characters are back, like Dimitri and that big Pyramid thing, but this time there are a couple of new monsters and, reputedly, a hidden character.



The Japanese absolutely adore the **DarkStalkers** series, but in Japan the game is known simply as "Vampire". The Japanese obviously have more patience than we do, because playing rehashed versions of now ancient games is not my idea of fun.

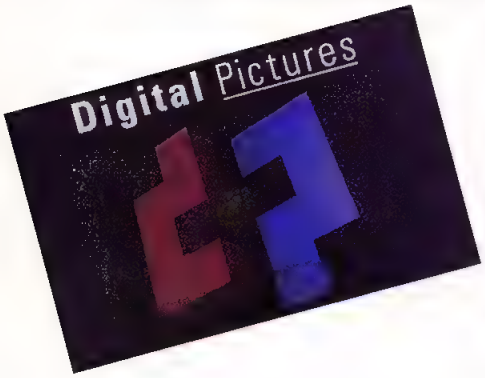
Interestingly enough, that kind of brings us on to the rumoured **Street Fighter 3D**, a coin-op that will feature Capcom's forthcoming 3-D arcade boards. Apparently Capcom have been hard at work on a 3-D driving game that is supposed to knock everything else clean out of the way.

It will almost certainly have **Street Fighter** characters in it though, which could be slightly offputting to the more serious drivers among us.

ARCE

So what the hell is

Are Full-Motion Video titles even games? Should we be comparing *Corpse Killer* with *Street Fighter*? Digital Pictures' CEO Tom Zito doesn't seem to think so and he has more than a couple of ideas about the shape of games to come...



Ultimate Gamer: What do you think Full-Motion Video has to offer that conventional game styles don't?

Tom Zito: There are several components to answering this question. FMV games are different, there clearly are some things you can't do with FMV that you can with a completely computer controlled, rendered on the fly Universe. Action games like NBA Jam have too many permutations, couldn't fit enough visual information on a CD to recreate that kind of experience using FMV.

UG: Do you think that Full-Motion Video has too many constricting limitations technically?

Tom Zito: There certainly are some limits to the media. It offers a level of reality experience that is won't be available in the home with computer generated graphics for five to ten years. Only now in labs are people starting to experiment with texture mapped "humans." Things are moving that way, like the stuff Robert Zemeckis did in **Forrest Gump**. It takes millions of dollars of computer equipment, hundreds of thousands dollars per second to create a realistic environment. I want characters who talk to me, underline the story and the plot. You can't do that without Full-Motion Video. It may not be as appealing to the hardcore gamer. The average person is used to going to movies, or watching TV. There's more comfort in an interactive experience than in a video game.

UG: Your company is striving to innovate and expand, but what is the driving philosophy behind it?

Tom Zito: The philosophy of Digital Pictures is to be involved in the broadcast media. We want to broaden our demographic, not just focusing on one market . Our audience tends to be older than the typical gamer. They do like the games better than traditional players. I mean, basically our players are not the sort of person who would go out and buy **NBA Jam**. They don't want to spend their time simply mastering a million combinations of buttons.

UG: Will Digital Pictures ever move into cable or Pay Per View?

Tom Zito: Although current cable technology is limited, it doesn't make sense to leave it analogue. Clearly cable has to become digital. When it does, it simultaneously becomes interactive. The roots of the company really are in this conceptual need to make programming for interactive cable. The only real interactive experience people can have is in a video game or computer environment. One of the things we are finding is that as Multimedia becomes more widly installed, the kinds of program you can do become much broader. We're starting to hit the kinds of numbers where from a business standpoint, interactive movies start to make sense. Cable will make that even more possible.

UG: What kind of projects do you have in mind for the cable media right now, bearing in mind mass-market appeal?

Tom Zito: We're interested in doing interactive soap opera, sports and possibly even news. That kind of stuff is impossible to do on CD-ROM, simply because on a soap opera for example you'd need a new CD every day. Nobody is prepared to make that kind of investment. In the first or second week of May, we'll be involved in a major interactive cable test. We'll have to reposition our existing product for a cable environment. We will also at some point begin to write specifically for cable. In that environment, to do something with rendered graphics would be nearly impossible. People have an expectation of realism, you can't deliver that with computer rendered stuff. Max

"When Thomas Edison first screened The Great Train Robbery, people ran from the cinema..."

wrong with FMV?

Headroom could be created, but people wouldn't accept it. That whole computer person thing reeks of 1984. If it doesn't feel or look like real actors, most people probably won't like it at all.

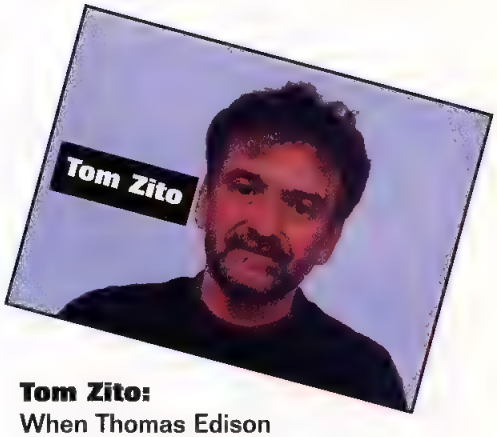
UG: What do you think of the press FMV has had to date?

Tom Zito: I would probably say that the press for the most part has been highly suspicious of FMV—and with good reason. Older games have been used as book ends. It has been compared to non-interactive eye candy. We could go further and say that a lot of game books don't like FMV because you can't have the kind of total control that you can have in a game in which the CPU of the game machines is putting the objects on the screen in a real-time environment. Conversely, normal press, mags, papers, that don't cover games have been much more open to FMV because it feels more like TV andmovies, and it's therefore much more acceptable.

UG: Do you think this has adversely affected the public's conception of Interactive Movies?

Tom Zito: Unfortunately the game press has failed for the most part to make a distinction between FMV and non-FMV products, at least in the sense that we want to reach exactly the same market as Acclaim products. FMV products are reviewed by people who have a natural and to some extent justified bias against FMV. Many of the people who buy this product are not diehard gamers. You don't review the **Lion King** in the sense that you'd review **Natural Born Killers**. You simply can't use the same critical process. You have to make sure you take into consideration the target audience.

UG: So are you saying the public just isn't ready for the interactive movie at this point?



Tom Zito: When Thomas Edison first screened **The Great Train Robbery**, people ran from the cinema. Things change and so do people's perceptions of things.

COMING UP...

Digital Pictures have a number of titles in the offing, and here's an exclusive sneak preview at what's around the corner.

MAXIMUM SURGE

Maximum Surge is a shoot-'em-up of sorts, the twist being that it's set in a post-apocalyptic nightmare wasteland, very much in the mould of **Mad Max**. Among the notable features are the special effects, handled by the same people who brought you the FX from **The Fugitive** and more recently, **Batman Forever**.

CYCLOPATHIC

Now this one sounds pretty interesting. It's set in San Francisco and you play the part of a cycle courier, your mission: to get a package from one side of town to the other. Simple as it sounds, the road is fraught with danger as a rival courier company tries to stop you from reaching your destination.

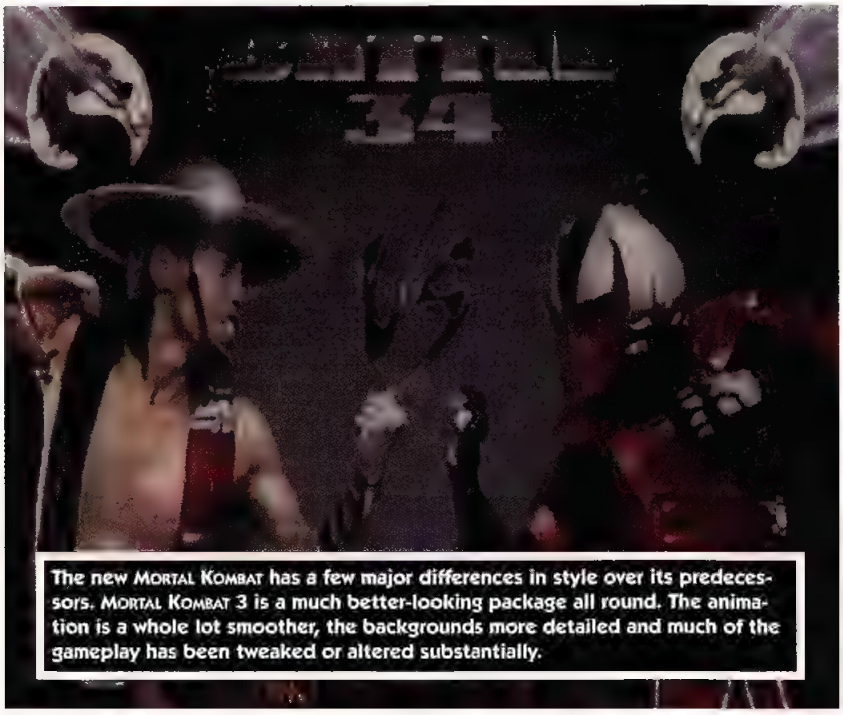
VIRAL TRANSMISSION (working title)

This one is a pure adventure game, set in a viral research laboratory. Your team of scientists are working on the antidote to a deadly virus when things start to go tragically wrong. First, a scientist is murdered, then the lab is invaded by hostile forces, intent on destroying your research and Mankind in general. Sounds like a very bad day at the office.

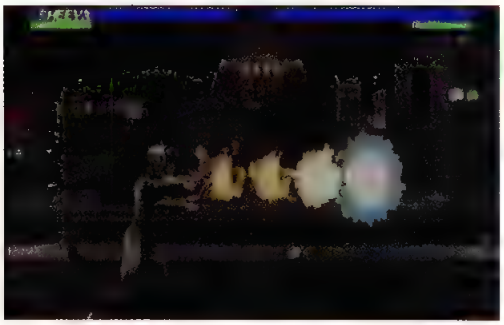
QUARTERBACK ATTACK

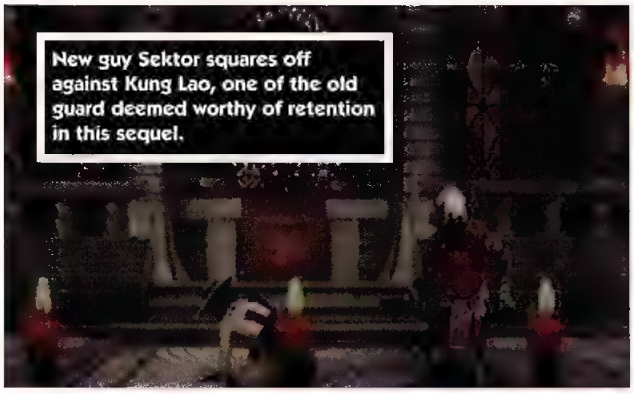
This one plays and feels very much like **Slam City**, and can best be described as a sports/strategy/adventure. You play the part of the eponymous Quarterback, and you have to lead your team to victory. There's plenty of action throughout, and quite a lot of brain

MORTAL KOMBAT 3



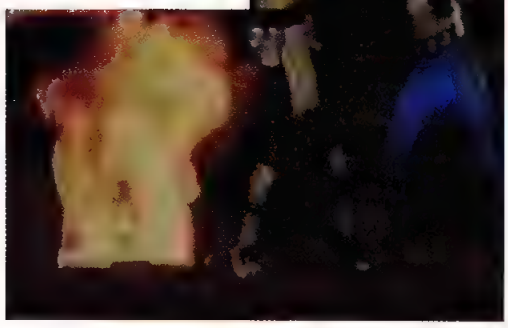
The new Mortal Kombat has a few major differences in style over its predecessors. Mortal Kombat 3 is a much better-looking package all round. The animation is a whole lot smoother, the backgrounds more detailed and much of the gameplay has been tweaked or altered substantially.

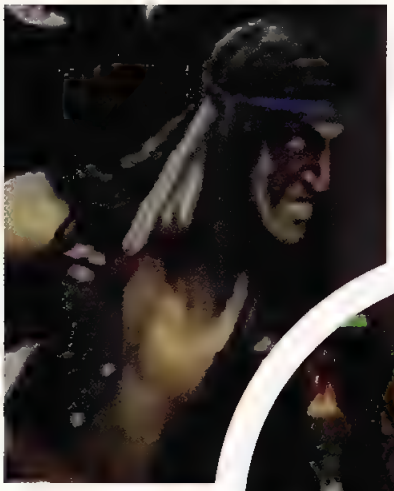




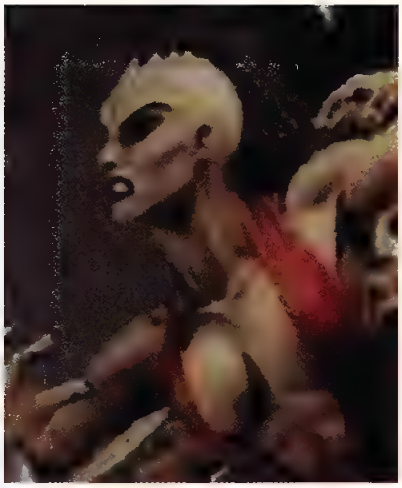
New guy Sektor squares off against Kung Lao, one of the old guard deemed worthy of retention in this sequel.

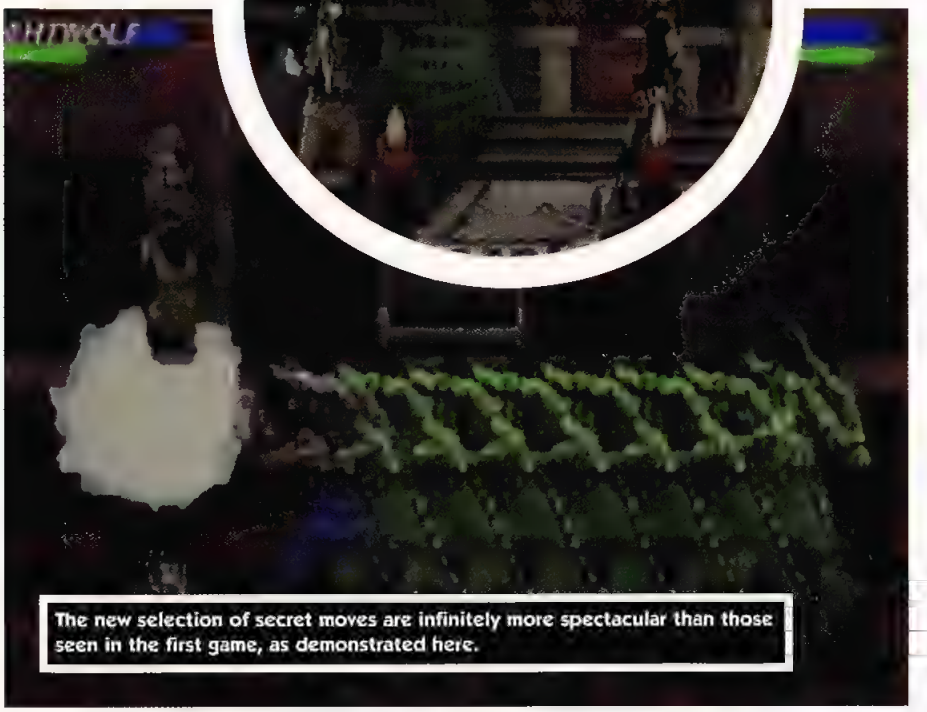
Nightwolf is another new addition, a four-armed freak from the Outworld, or possibly West Hollywood.



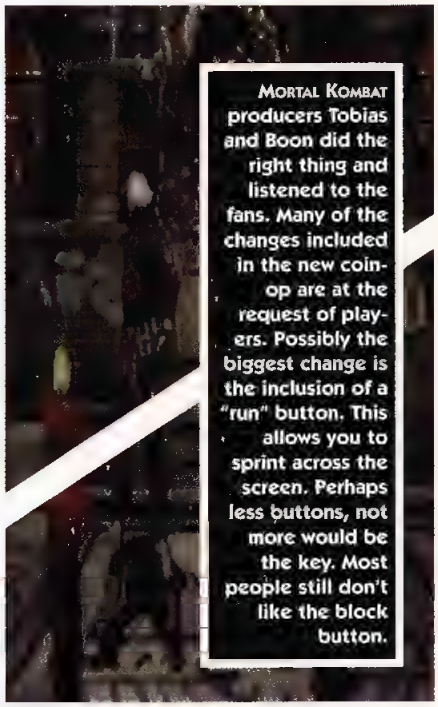


Yes the game does have a Native American fighter (almost necessary in fighting games these days), but it also has a spooky she-male with four arms and a bad attitude.

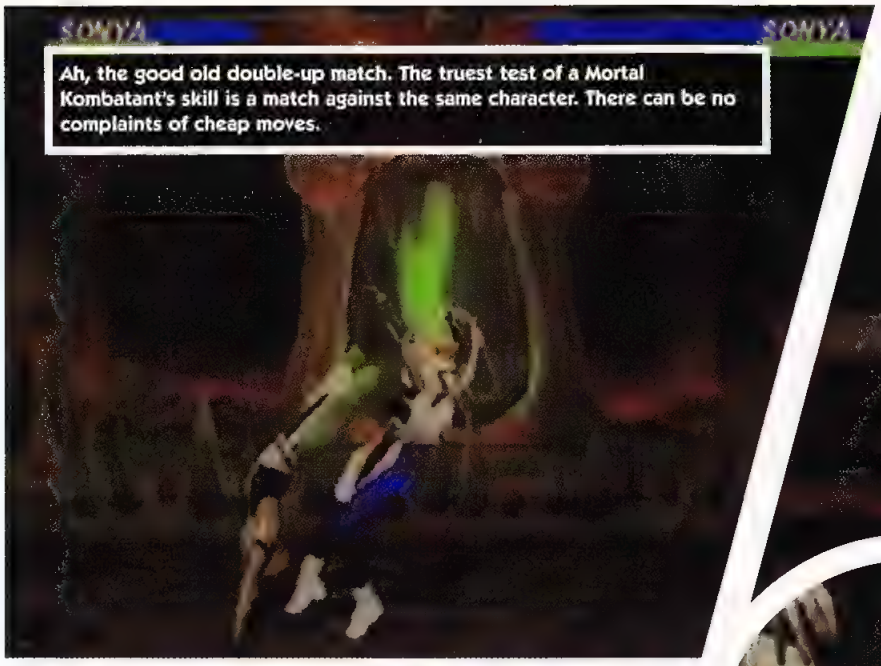




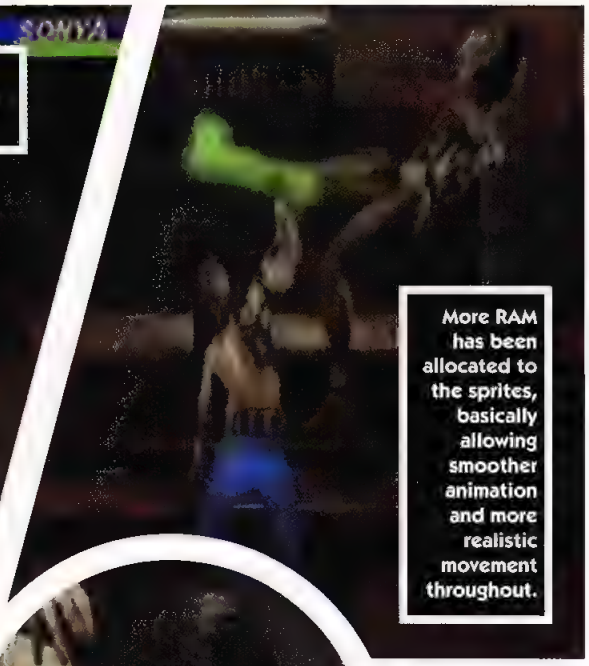
The new selection of secret moves are infinitely more spectacular than those seen in the first game, as demonstrated here.



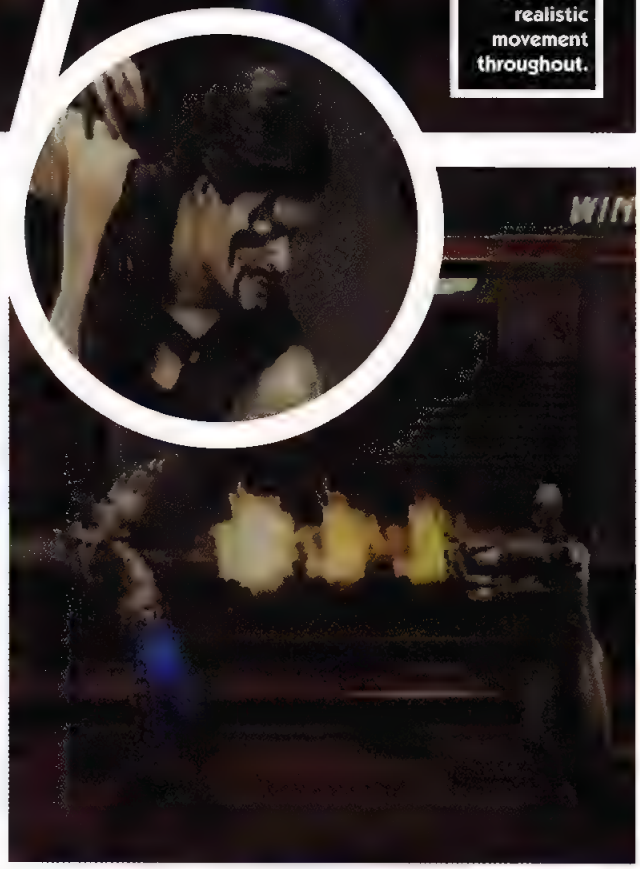
Mortal Kombat producers Tobias and Boon did the right thing and listened to the fans. Many of the changes included in the new coin-op are at the request of players. Possibly the biggest change is the inclusion of a "run" button. This allows you to sprint across the screen. Perhaps less buttons, not more would be the key. Most people still don't like the block button.

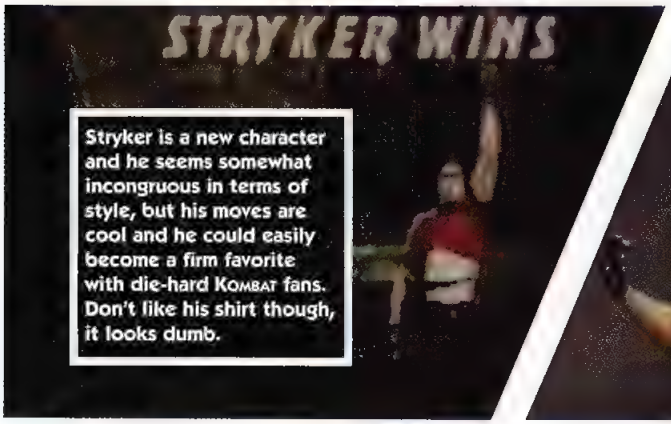


Ah, the good old double-up match. The truest test of a Mortal Kombatant's skill is a match against the same character. There can be no complaints of cheap moves.

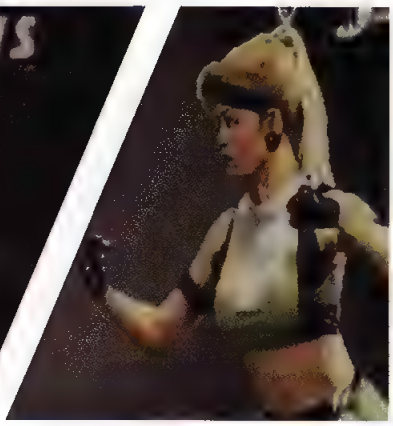


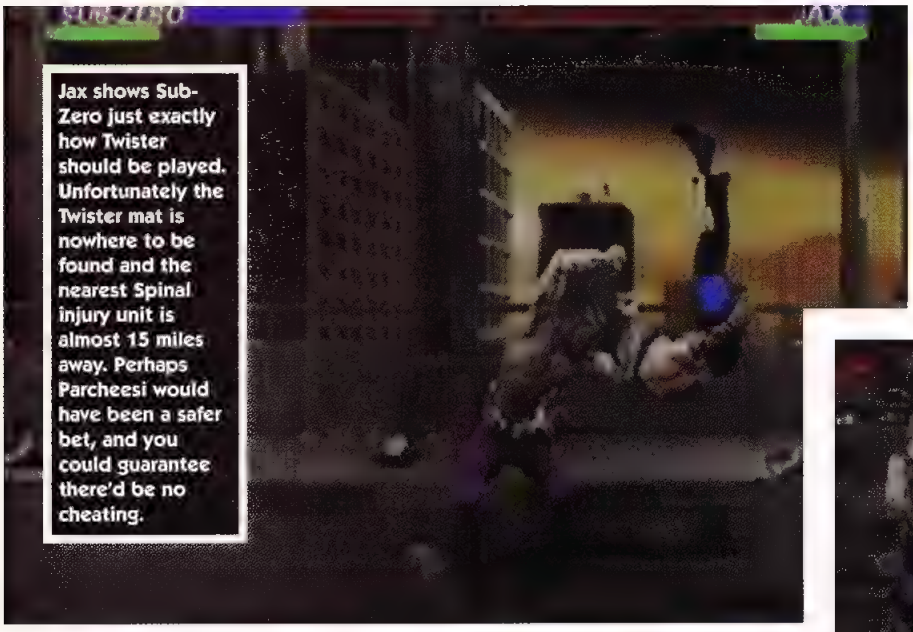
More RAM has been allocated to the sprites, basically allowing smoother animation and more realistic movement throughout.



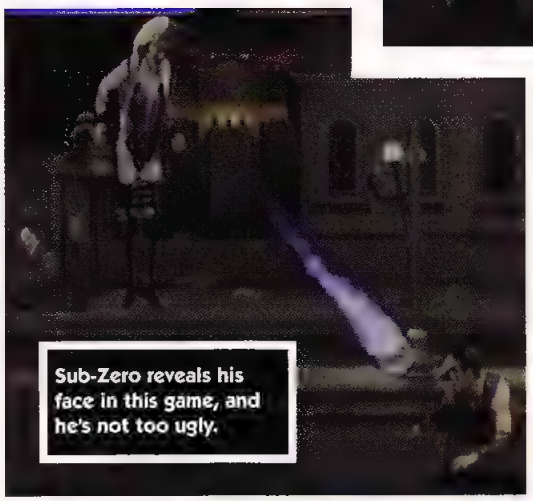


Stryker is a new character and he seems somewhat incongruous in terms of style, but his moves are cool and he could easily become a firm favorite with die-hard Kombat fans. Don't like his shirt though, it looks dumb.

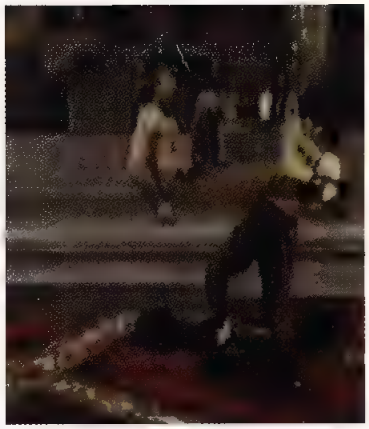


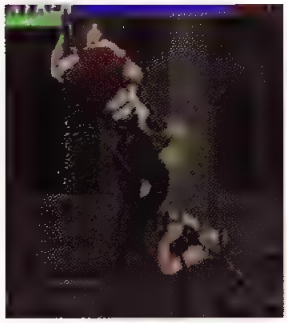


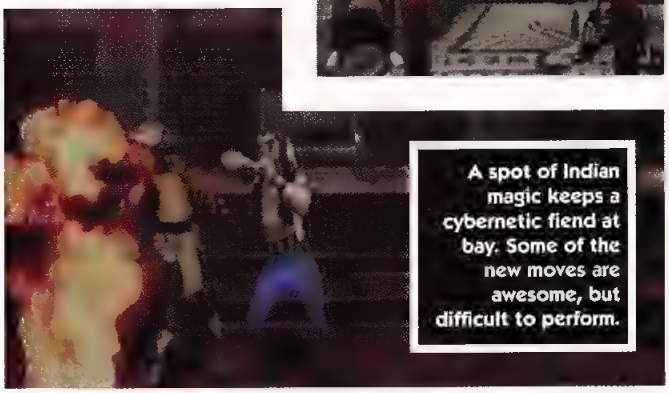
Jax shows Sub-Zero just exactly how Twister should be played. Unfortunately the Twister mat is nowhere to be found and the nearest Spinal injury unit is almost 15 miles away. Perhaps Parcheesi would have been a safer bet, and you could guarantee there'd be no cheating.



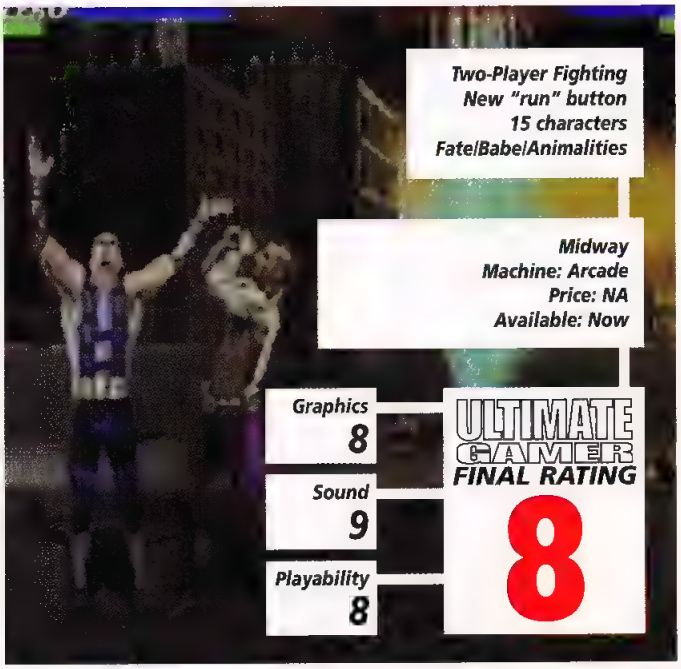
Sub-Zero reveals his face in this game, and he's not too ugly.







A spot of Indian magic keeps a cybernetic fiend at bay. Some of the new moves are awesome, but difficult to perform.



Two-Player Fighting
New "run" button
15 characters
Fate/Babe/Animalities

Midway
Machine: Arcade
Price: NA
Available: Now

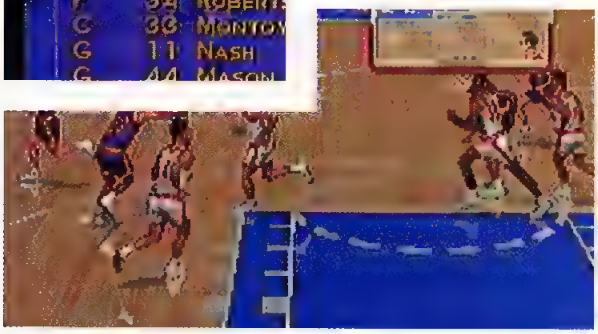
Graphics	8
Sound	9
Playability	8

ULTIMATE GAMER FINAL RATING **8**

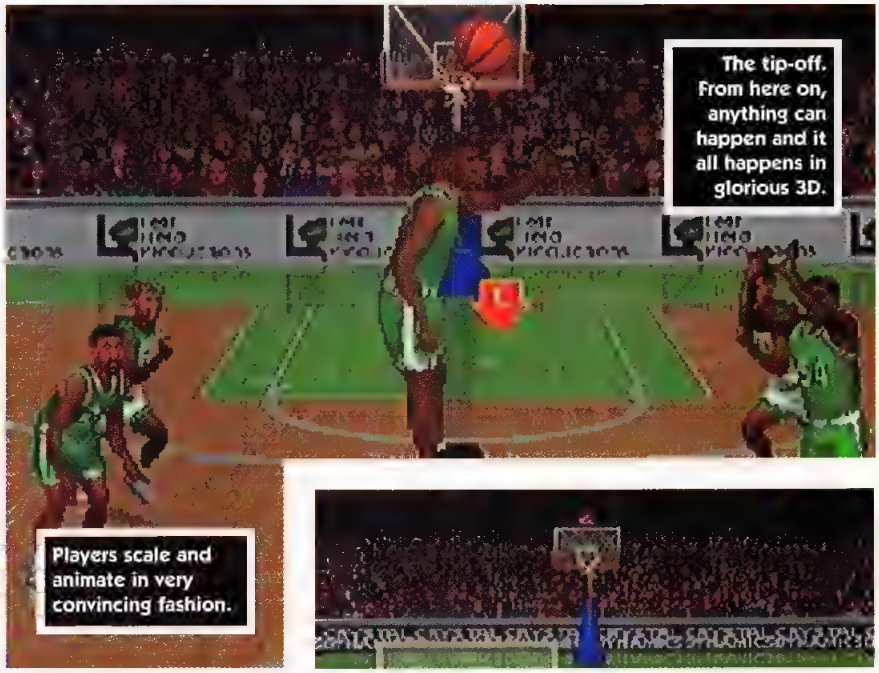
SLAM N' JAM 95

A little bit of a scuffle as two players attempt to go for the same loose ball.

You can view the action from only one angle.



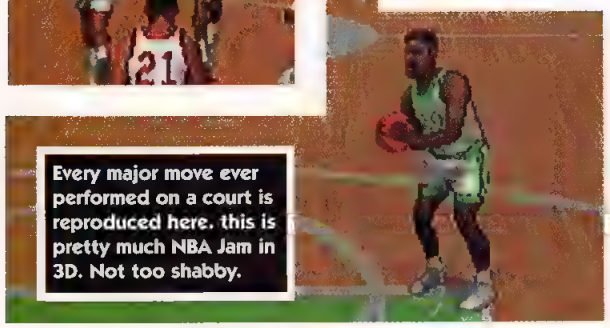
Close-ups are automatically activated for slam-dunks. So you can show off to your pals when you do something cool.



The tip-off. From here on, anything can happen and it all happens in glorious 3D.

Players scale and animate in very convincing fashion.

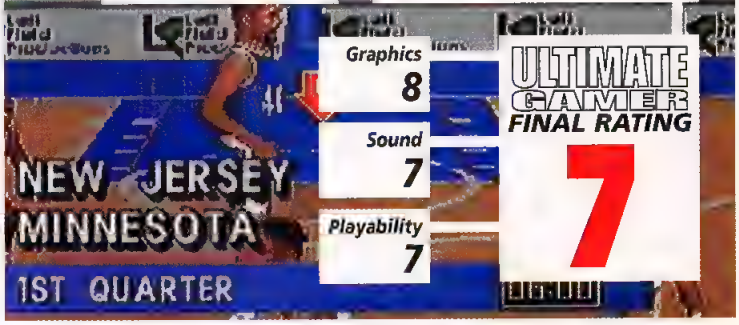
It's possible to play a whole season as one team, but more fun to switch sides as well as players.



Every major move ever performed on a court is reproduced here. this is pretty much NBA Jam in 3D. Not too shabby.

3D Basketball
Scaling Sprites
Full Seasons
Individual Stats

Crystal Dynamics
Machine: 3DO
Price: TBA
Available: July



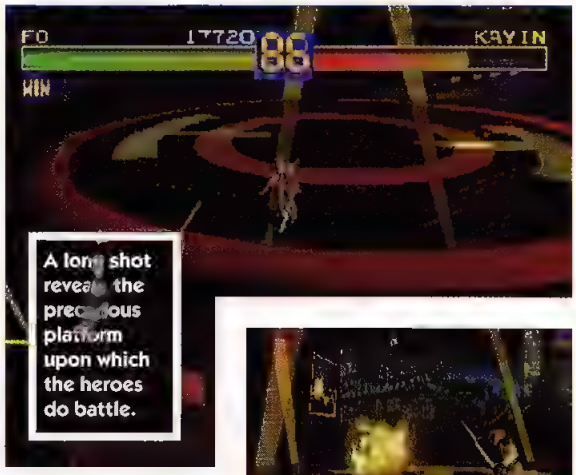
Graphics	8
Sound	7
Playability	7

ULTIMATE GAMER FINAL RATING

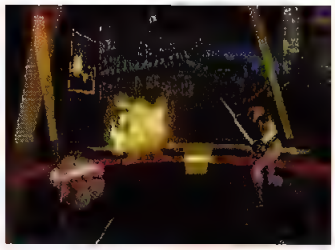
7

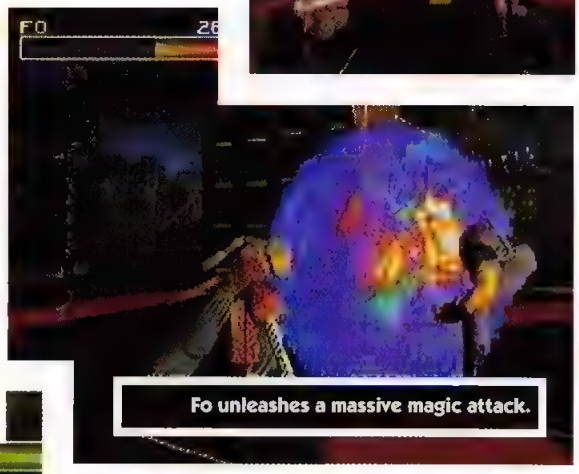
TOH SHIN DEN

Only Toh Shin Den comes close to VIRTUA FIGHTER 2.



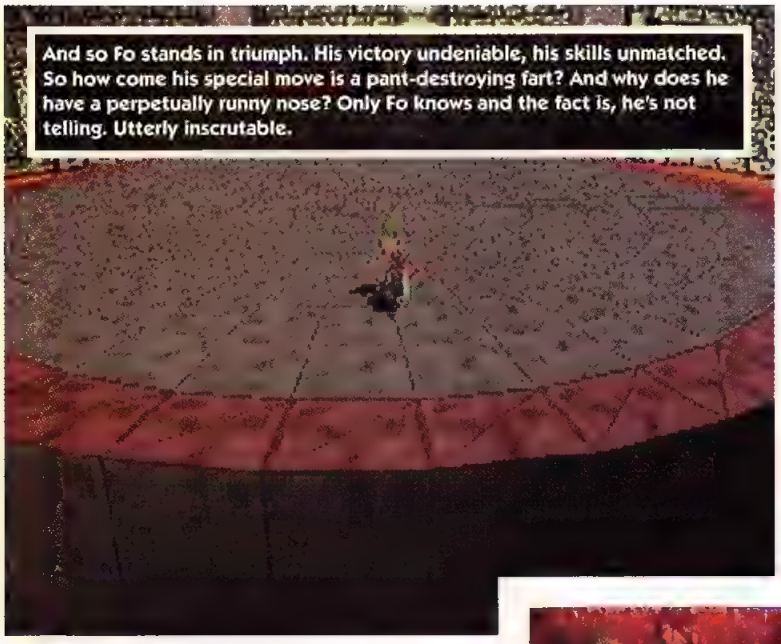
A long shot reveals the precarious platform upon which the heroes do battle.



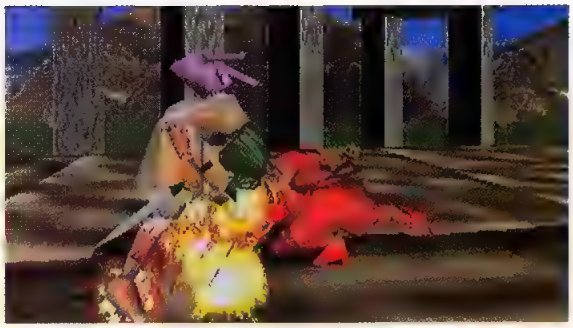


Fo unleashes a massive magic attack.

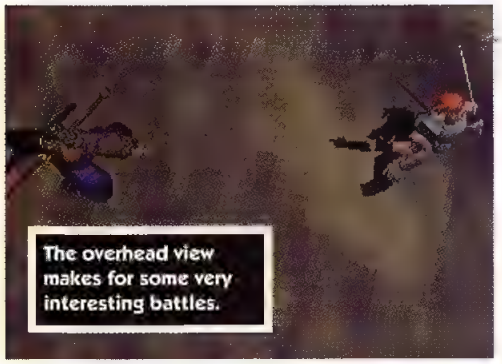
Some close-ups reveal the enormous detail that's texture-mapped onto the characters. Unbelievable.



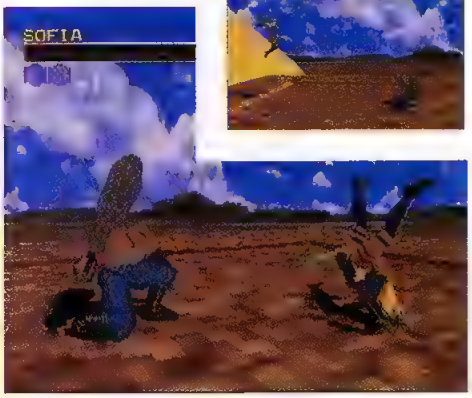
And so Fo stands in triumph. His victory undeniable, his skills unmatched. So how come his special move is a pant-destroying fart? And why does he have a perpetually runny nose? Only Fo knows and the fact is, he's not telling. Utterly inscrutable.

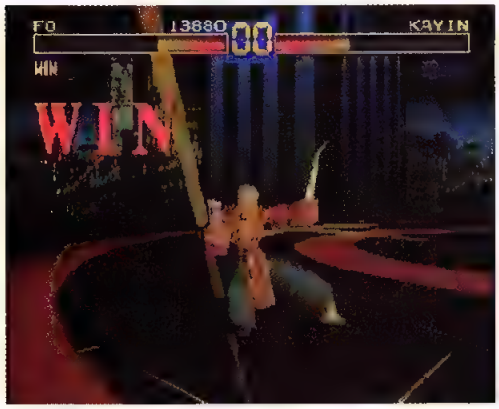


A girl fight between Ellis and Ellis ends in tragedy for Ellis, the pink one lying on the floor.



The overhead view makes for some very interesting battles.





2 Player 3D Fighting
Memory card support
Hidden characters
Multiple viewpoints

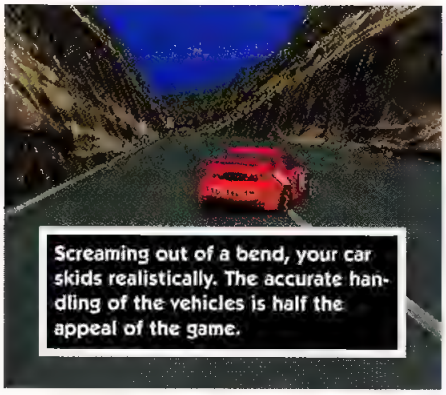
Takara (Japan)
Machine: Sony PlayStation
Price: $90 (import)
Available: Now

Graphics	10
Sound	7
Playability	9

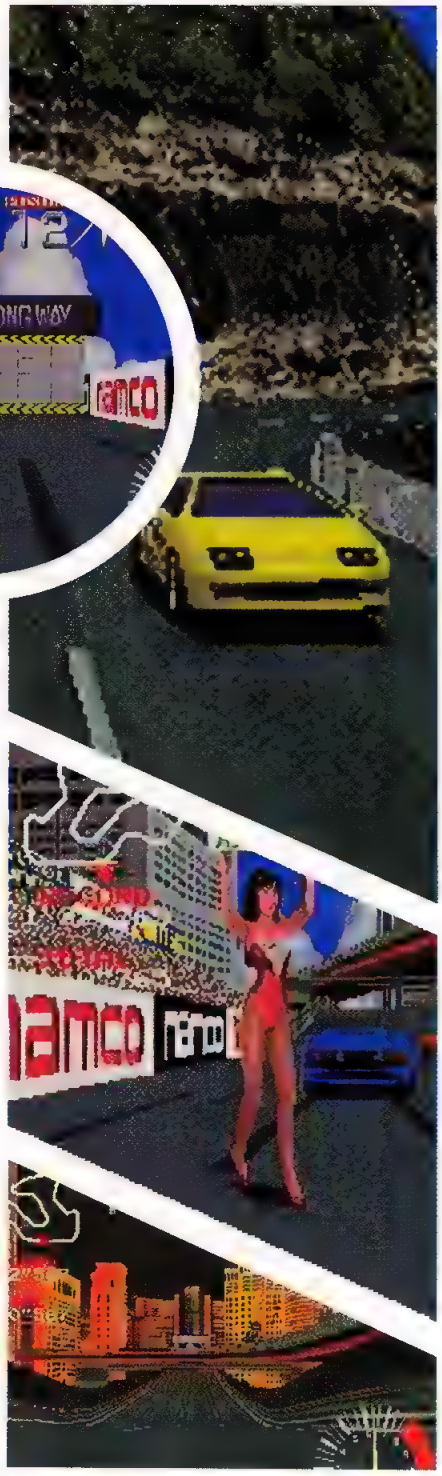
ULTIMATE GAMER FINAL RATING **9**

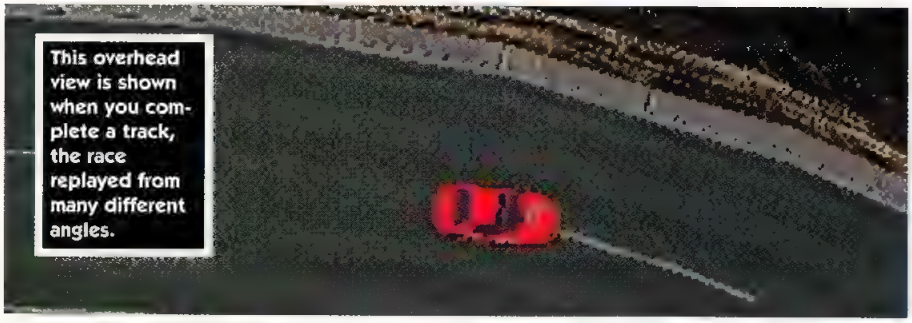
RIDGE RACER

Although the graphics are obviously gorgeous, what you can't see is the awesome speed and fluidity of movement. Ridge Racer rocks. The best Racer ever? The Japanese seem to think so, and a staggering 98% of all PlayStation owners bought this game. One track might not seem much, but there are secrets...

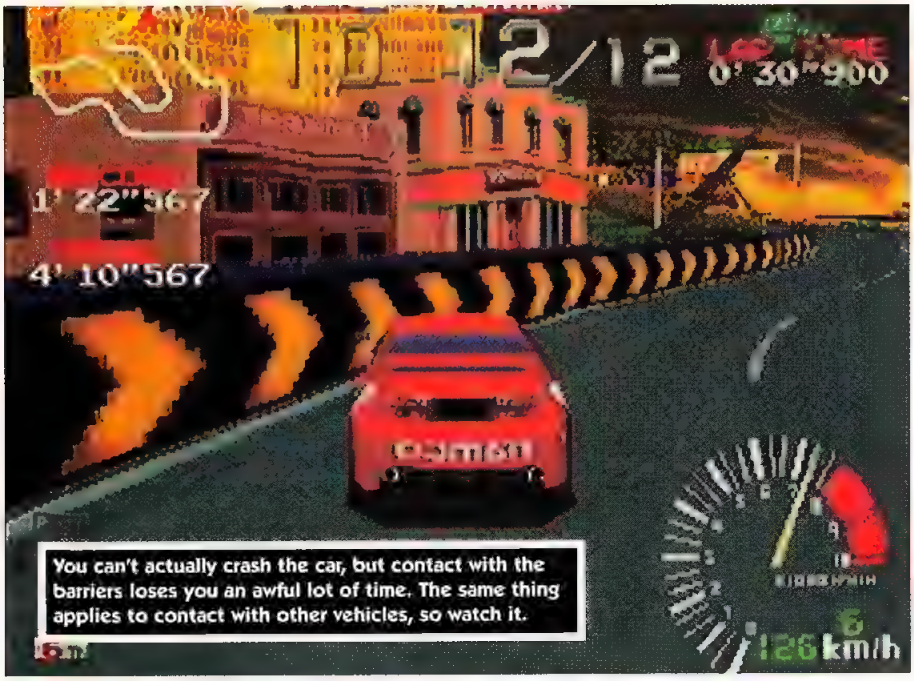


Screaming out of a bend, your car skids realistically. The accurate handling of the vehicles is half the appeal of the game.



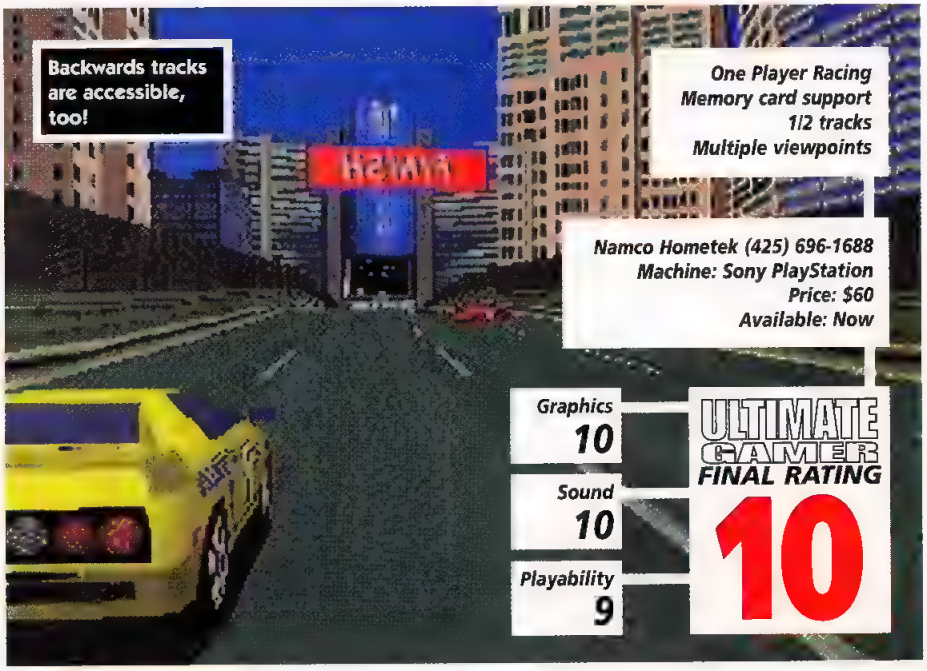


This overhead view is shown when you complete a track, the race replayed from many different angles.



You can't actually crash the car, but contact with the barriers loses you an awful lot of time. The same thing applies to contact with other vehicles, so watch it.

Sadly the single track means Ridge Racer's long term appeal is limited, but it does leave scope for a stunning sequel or two.



Backwards tracks are accessible, too!

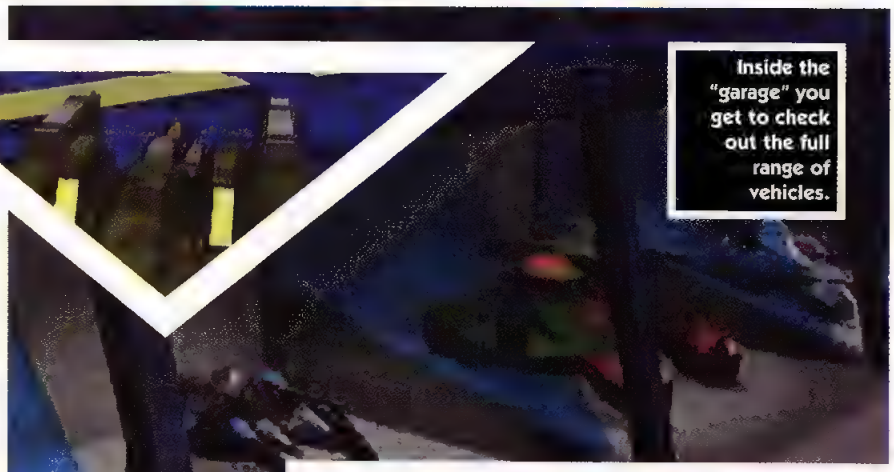
One Player Racing
Memory card support
1/2 tracks
Multiple viewpoints

Namco Hometek (425) 696-1688
Machine: Sony PlayStation
Price: $60
Available: Now

Graphics	10
Sound	10
Playability	9

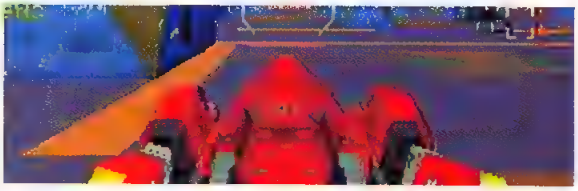
ULTIMATE GAMER FINAL RATING **10**

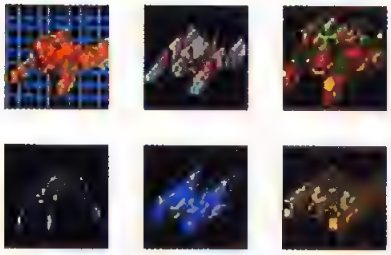
CYBER SLED

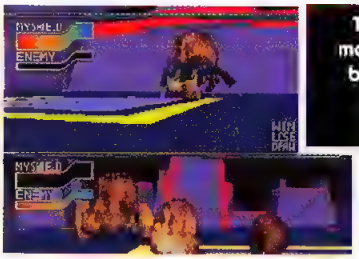


Inside the "garage" you get to check out the full range of vehicles.

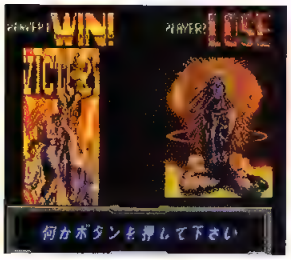
You can view the action from only one angle.

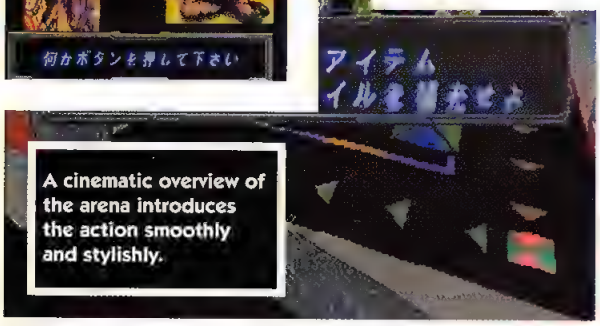




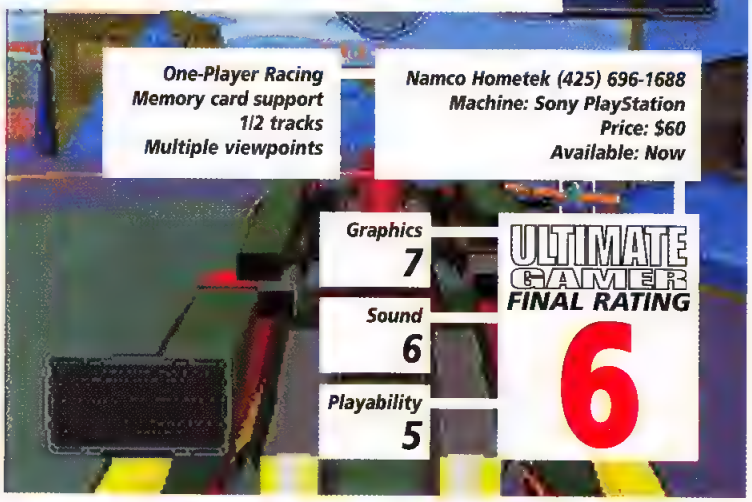


The split-screen battle mode is fun, but limited by the small number of tanks and the too-similar arenas.





A cinematic overview of the arena introduces the action smoothly and stylishly.



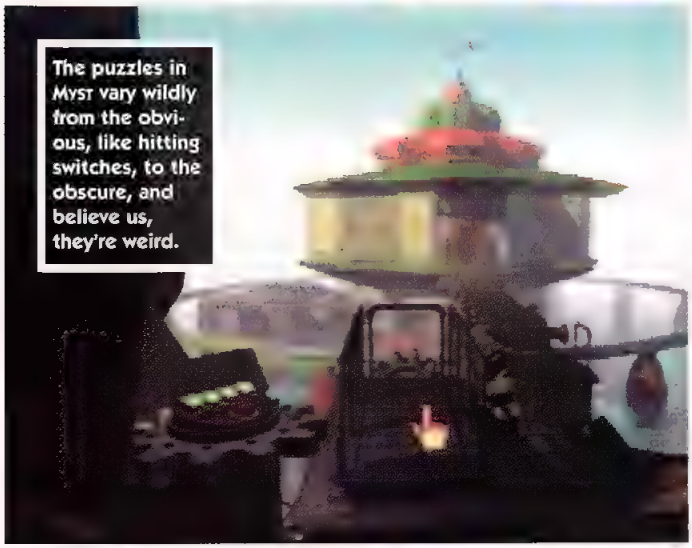
One-Player Racing
Memory card support
1/2 tracks
Multiple viewpoints

Namco Hometek (425) 696-1688
Machine: Sony PlayStation
Price: $60
Available: Now

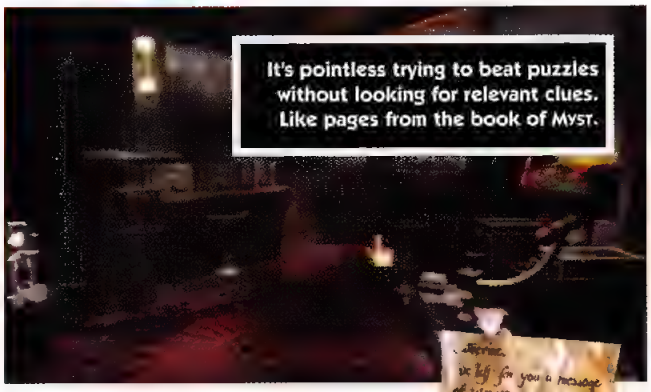
Graphics	7
Sound	6
Playability	5

ULTIMATE GAMER FINAL RATING **6**

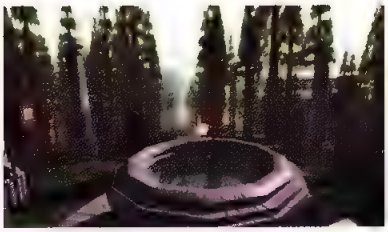
MYST

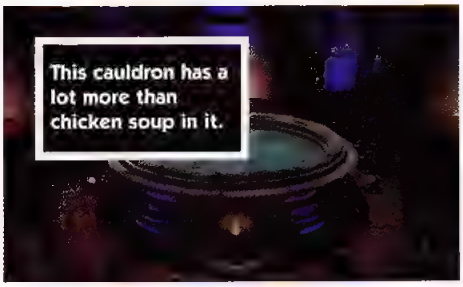


The puzzles in MYST vary wildly from the obvious, like hitting switches, to the obscure, and believe us, they're weird.



It's pointless trying to beat puzzles without looking for relevant clues. Like pages from the book of MYST.





This cauldron has a lot more than chicken soup in it.

Surreal Adventure
Full Motion Cut Scenes
Multiple adventures
Intuitive icon control

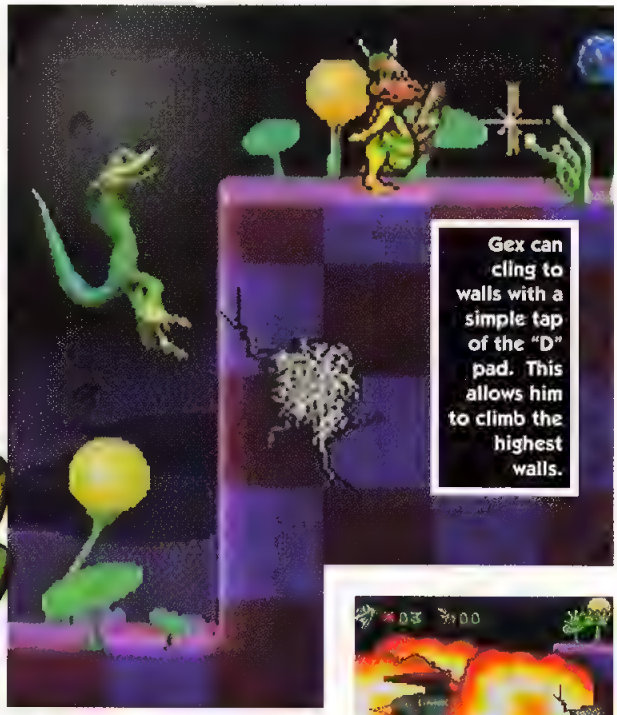
Cyan Software
Machine: 3DO
Price: $60
Available: Now

Graphics	8
Sound	7
Playability	7

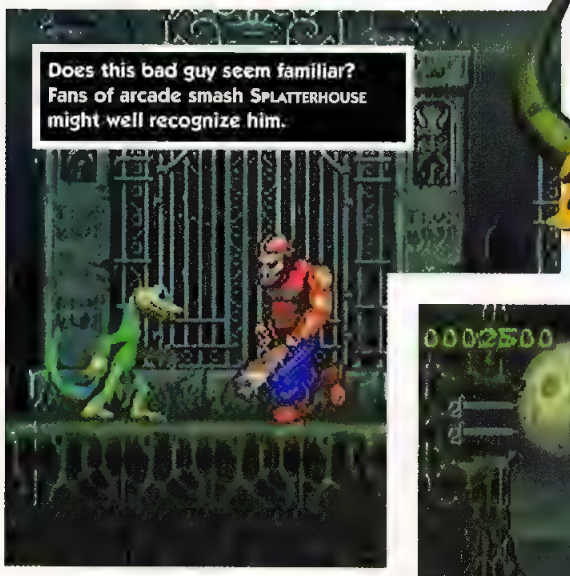
ULTIMATE GAMER FINAL RATING **7**

GEX

Gex relies a lot on his tail-swipe move. It's devastating at close quarters.



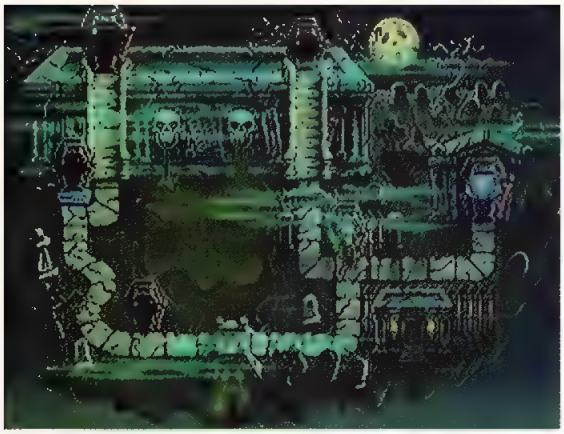
Gex can cling to walls with a simple tap of the "D" pad. This allows him to climb the highest walls.



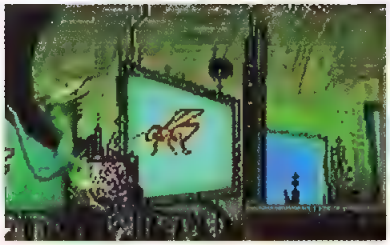
Does this bad guy seem familiar? Fans of arcade smash SPLATTERHOUSE might well recognize him.

Use the Warp Portals to get around.

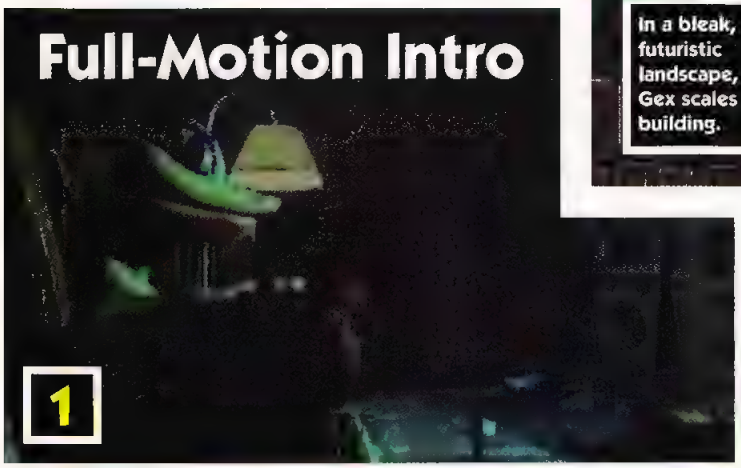
Ren and Stimpy-inspired animation is typical of the gorgeous sprites found throughout GEX.



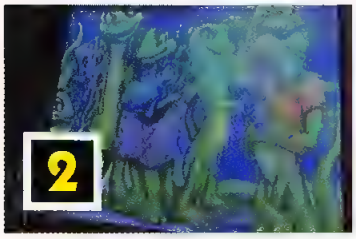
In a bleak, futuristic landscape, Gex scales a building.



Full-Motion Intro

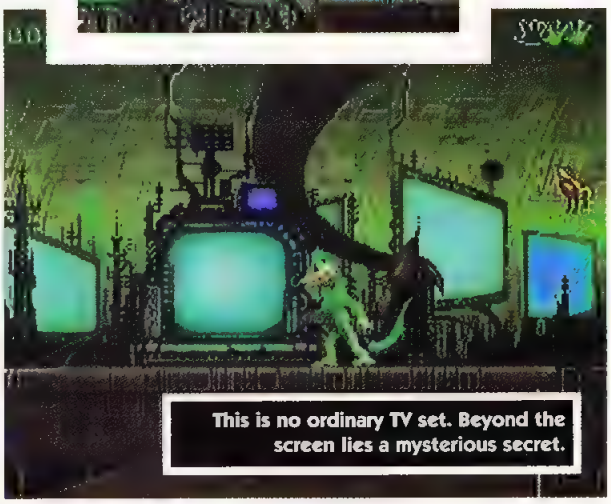


1

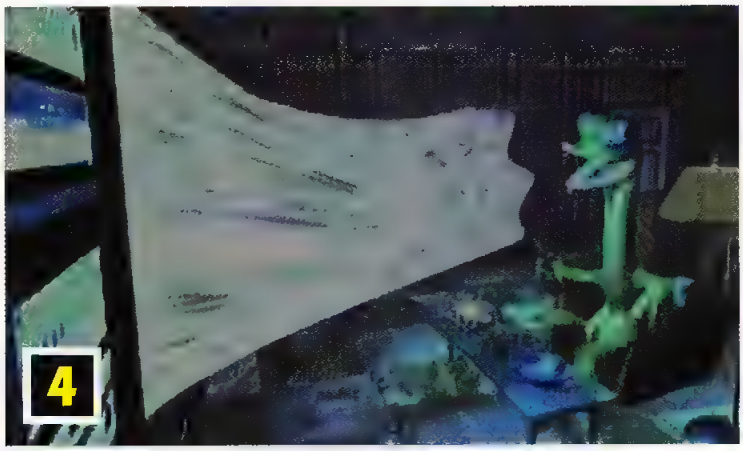


2

3



This is no ordinary TV set. Beyond the screen lies a mysterious secret.



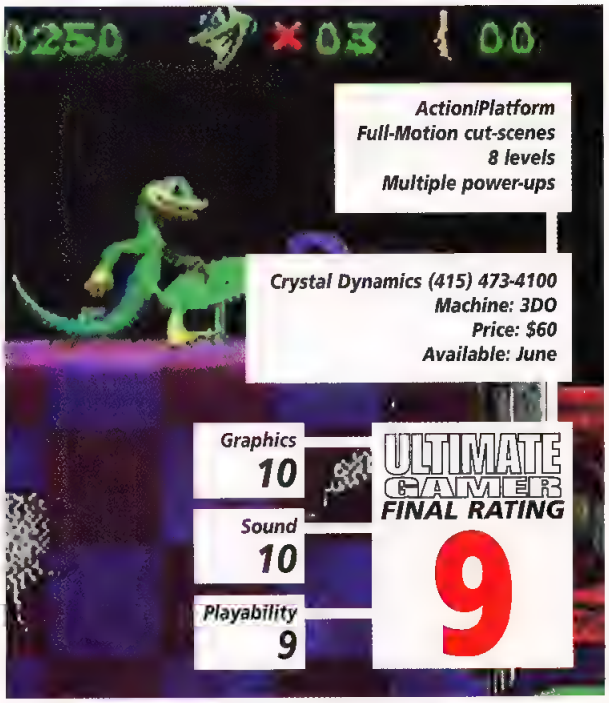
4

1 Our lizard-like hero. Gex, settles down to enjoy some good old-fashioned TV.

2 A picture of the family reveals that Gex is a nice, wholesome sort of guy. And so he relaxes...

3 ...not suspecting that his every move is being watched by an evil insect from another dimension.

4 A dimension of TV nightmares that Gex will soon find himself trapped in, possibly forever.



Action/Platform
Full-Motion cut-scenes
8 levels
Multiple power-ups

Crystal Dynamics (415) 473-4100
Machine: 3DO
Price: $60
Available: June

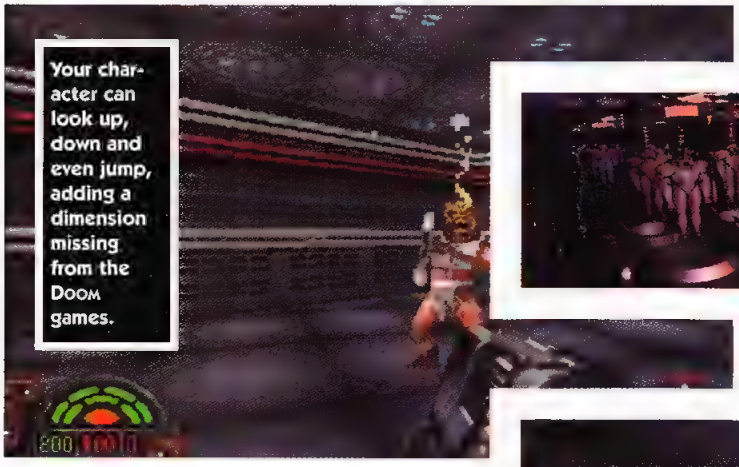
Graphics	10
Sound	10
Playability	9

ULTIMATE GAMER FINAL RATING **9**

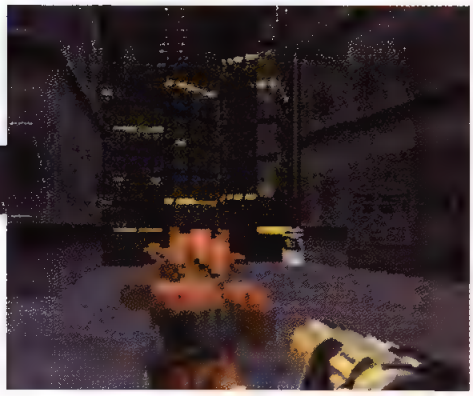
DARK FORCES

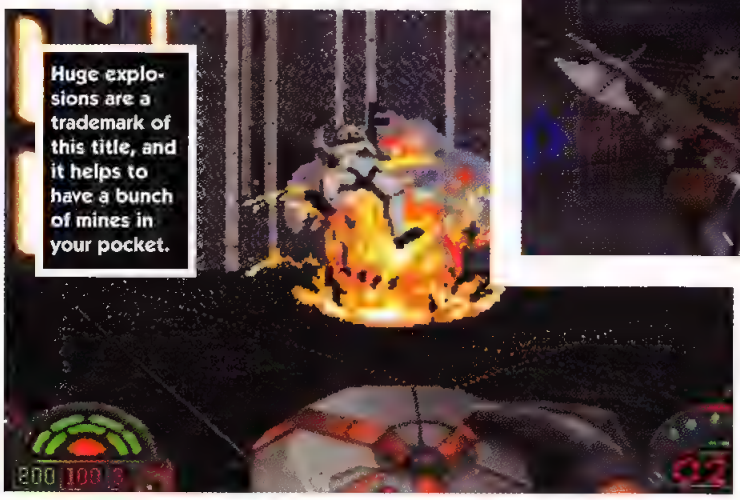
The 3-D engine gives Doom 2 a real run for its money, as does the frantically involving gameplay.

Death Star troopers are all over the place, but can be dispatched with relative ease.

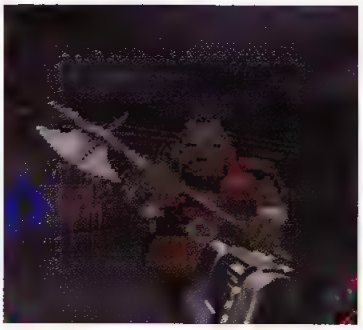


Your character can look up, down and even jump, adding a dimension missing from the Doom games.





Huge explosions are a trademark of this title, and it helps to have a bunch of mines in your pocket.

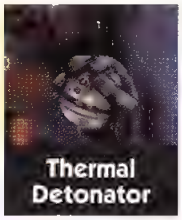


Dark Forces' monsters are imaginative and tough to beat.

Fist

Blaster

Laser Rifle


Thermal Detonator

Repeater Gun

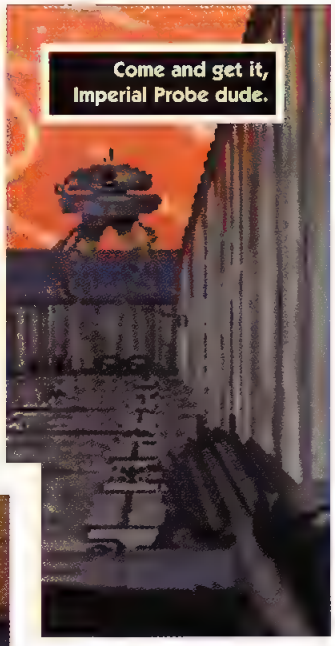
Mortar Launcher

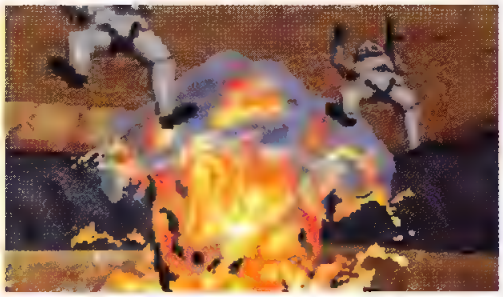
Fusion Cutter

I.M. Mines

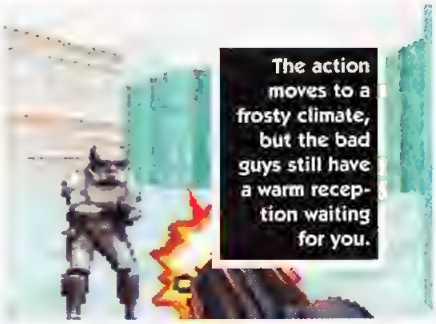
Concussion Rifle

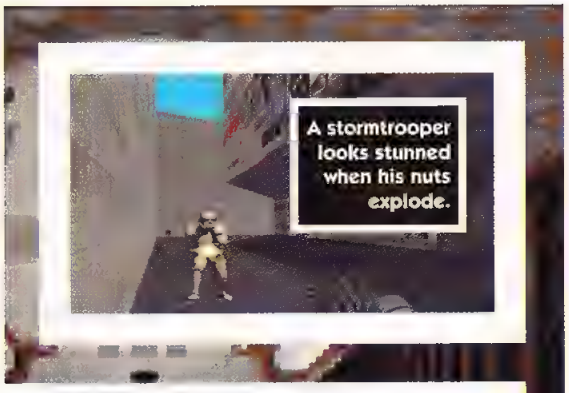
Dark Trooper Gun

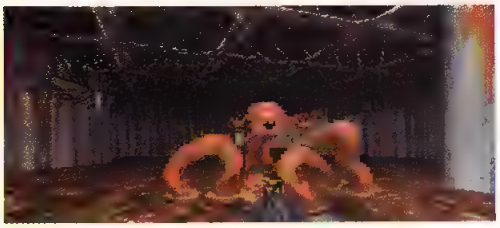

Come and get it, Imperial Probe dude.

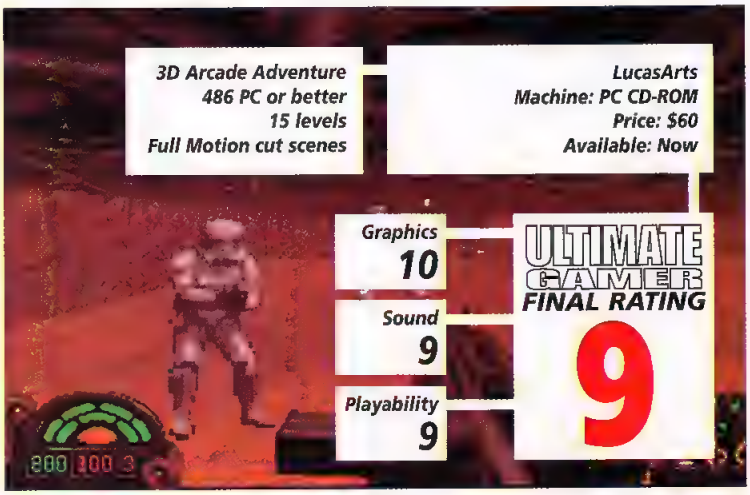


The feeling of immersion in the Star Wars universe is what this game is all about. And it feels perfect.


The action moves to a frosty climate, but the bad guys still have a warm reception waiting for you.


A stormtrooper looks stunned when his nuts explode.

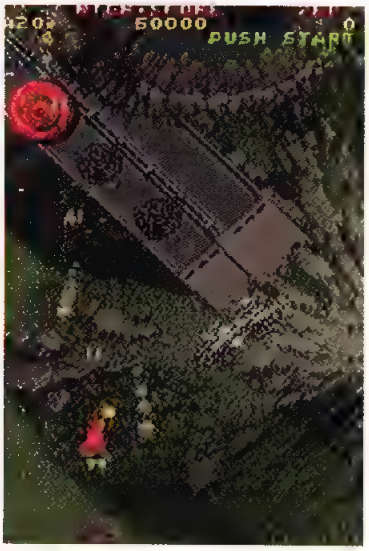


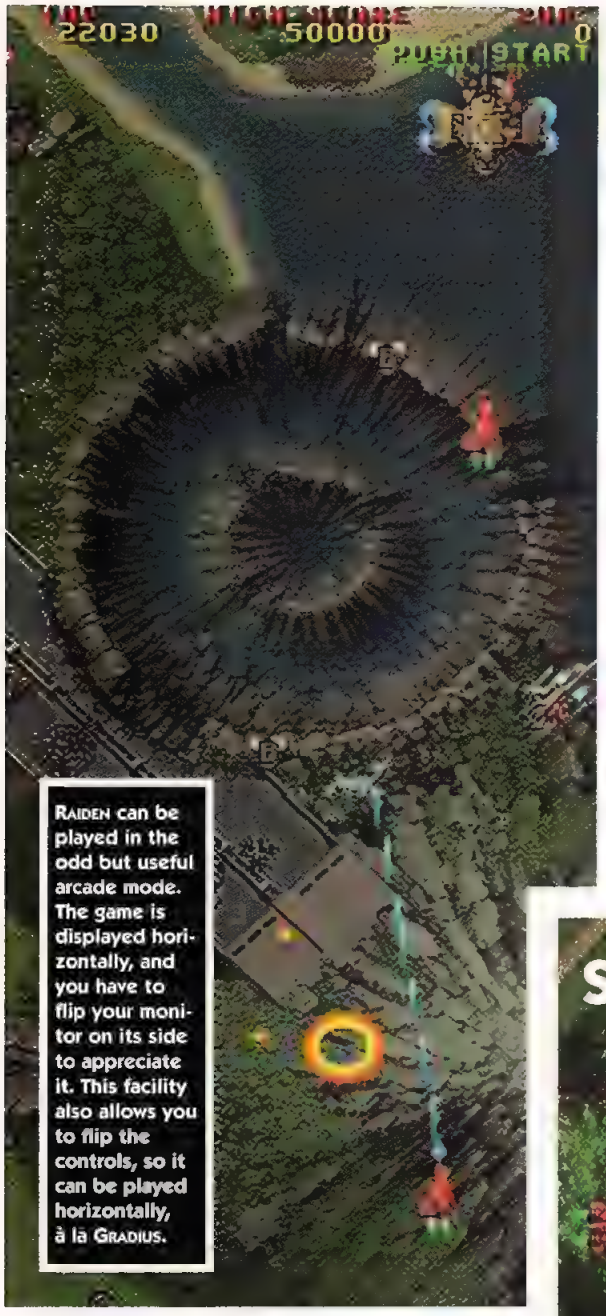


RAIDEN PROJECT

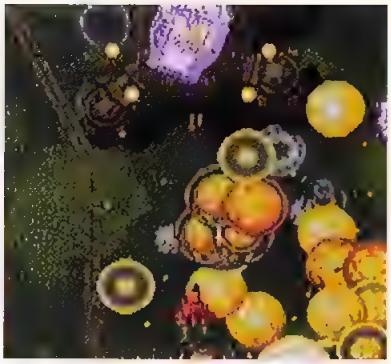
RAIDEN is a very straightforward blaster with plenty of guts in the graphics department. But what makes it really special is the fact that RAIDEN 1 and 2 are both included on the CD. This represents awesome value for money, especially in these days of short, shallow, shitty gaming experiences. Some cool sounds too.

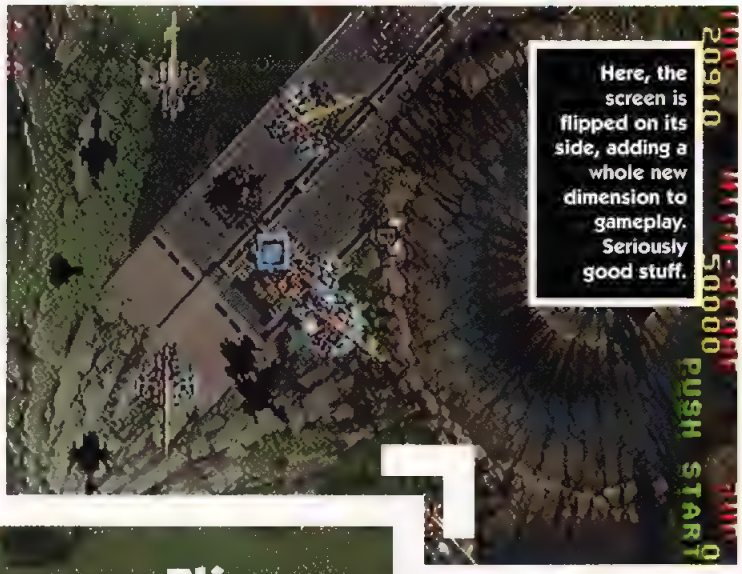
Massive explosions are a trademark of RAIDEN, and believe us, this one here is pretty small by comparison.





RAIDEN can be played in the odd but useful arcade mode. The game is displayed horizontally, and you have to flip your monitor on its side to appreciate it. This facility also allows you to flip the controls, so it can be played horizontally, à la GRADIUS.





Here, the screen is flipped on its side, adding a whole new dimension to gameplay. Seriously good stuff.

Screen Flip

One/Two-Player Shooter
Memory card support
2 games, 2 viewpoints
Huge, numerous levels

Seibu Kaihatsu
Machine: Sony PlayStation
Price: $60
Available: Now (import)

Graphics	7
Sound	7
Playability	8

ULTIMATE GAMER FINAL RATING **8**

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OFFER EXPIRES AUGUST 21, 1995 TAUG56

Countdown

USA

(The way it is)

↑	1	NBA Jam TE	Acclaim	Gen
↑	2	NBA Jam TE	Acclaim	SNES
↓	3	Donkey Kong Country	Nintendo	SNES
-	4	X-Men 2	Acclaim	Gen
-	5	Kirby's Avalanche	Nintendo	SNES
-	6	Spider Man	Acclaim	SNES
↓	7	Ristar	Sega	Gen
↓	8	Kirby's Dream Course	Nintendo	SNES
↓	9	Uniracer	Nintendo	SNES
↓	10	Road Rash 3	EA	Gen

(The way it should be)

↑	1	Tekken	Namco	PSX
↑	2	Toh Shin Den	Takara	PSX
↓	3	Panzer Dragoon	Sega	SNES
New	4	Ridge Racer	Namco	SNES
-	5	Super Street Fighter 2	Capcom	Jag
-	6	Dark Forces	LucasArts	3DO
New	7	Killer Instinct	Midway	CD-i
New	8	Gex	Crystal Dynamics	Sat
↓	9	Shinobi X	Sega	PSX
↓	10	Hi-Ten BomberMan	Hudson	32X

PC

↑	1	Doom II	GT Interactive
-	2	Myst	Broderbund
↑	3	Sim City 2000	Maxis
↑	4	X Wing Collector's CD	LucasArts
↑	5	Microsoft Ent. Pack	Microsoft
↓	6	Wing Commander III	Origin
↓	7	Microsoft Flight Simulator	Microsoft
↑	8	5 ft 10 Pack Vol. 2	Sirius
-	9	7th Guest	Virgin
New	10	D!Zone Collector's Edition	Wizard Works

Import (ALL FORMATS)

↑	1	Daytona USA	Sega	Sat
New	2	Tekken	Namco	PSX
↓	3	Toh Shin Den	Takara	PSX
↓	4	Virtua Fighter	Sega	Sat
-	5	Raiden Project	Seibu	PSX
New	6	Chrono Trigger	Square	SNES
↓	7	Kileak The Blood	Sony	PSX
↓	8	Motor Toon GP	Sony	PSX
↓	9	Clockwork Knight	Sega	Sat
↓	10	Ridge Racer	Namco	PSX

Arcade

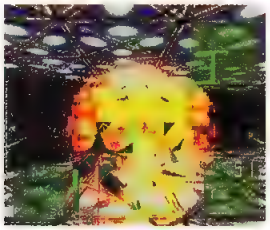
New	1	Mortal Kombat 3	Midway
↑	2	Sega Rally	Sega
↓	3	Ace Driver	Namco
↓	4	Super Street Fighter Turbo	Capcom
-	5	Daytona USA	Sega
-	6	Darkstalkers	Capcom
↓	7	NBA JAM TE	Midway
↓	8	Ridge Racer 2	Namco
↓	9	Mortal Kombat II	Midway
↓	10	Killer Instinct	Midway

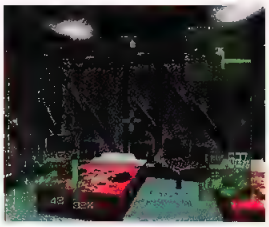
Stuff We Dig

1. One pissed-off Mike Tyson being let out to fight
2. Pamela Anderson
3. Happy hour
4. Games without FMV
5. Guns
6. Ultra-violent, manly fighting games
7. Jeffrey Dhamer getting what he deserves
8. The new Neo•Geo control pads
9. Uma Thurman
10. That elf-chick from Star Trek Voyager

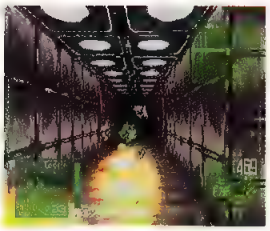
KILEAK THE BLOOD

KILEAK is a straightforward DOOM-style adventure game, with more emphasis on puzzles and strategy than blasting. The graphics are butter-smooth and feature some pretty impressive 3-D opponents. The game can be tiring, and perhaps a little repetitive, but the Japanese text and speech are no obstacle.

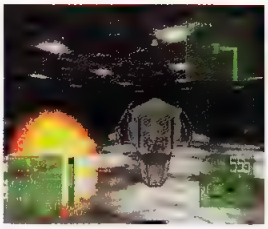




Full-motion video cut-scenes play an important part in the action and blend in flawlessly with the action.



KILEAK generates plenty of creepy atmosphere when you find traces of murdered space colonists and nasty dried patches of blood.



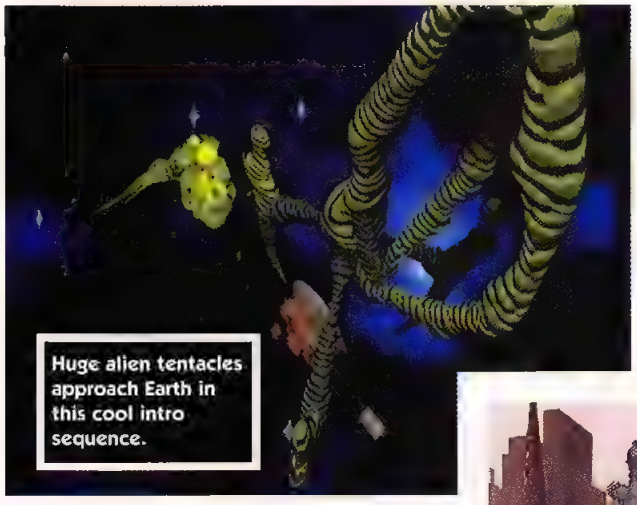
Arcade Adventure
Memory card support
Multiple missions
JPEG Full-Motion Video

Sony Computer Entertainment
Machine: Sony PlayStation
Price: $80 (import)
Available: Now

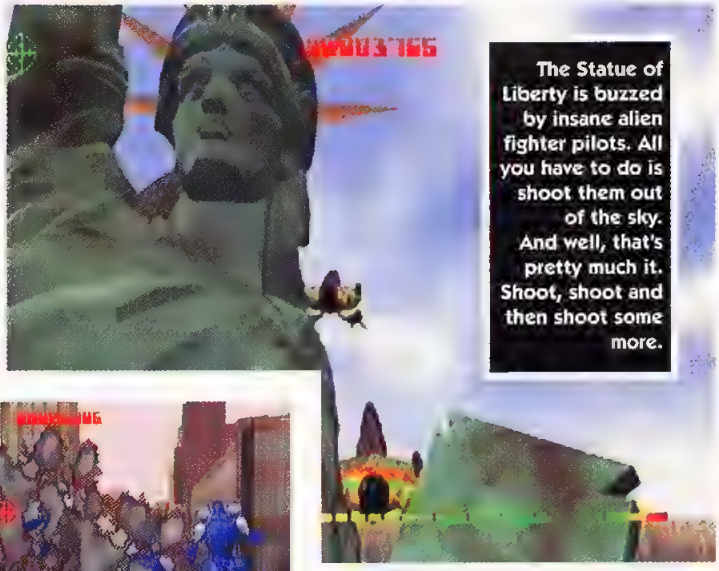
Graphics	8
Sound	6
Playability	6

ULTIMATE GAMER FINAL RATING **6**

CHAOS CONTROL

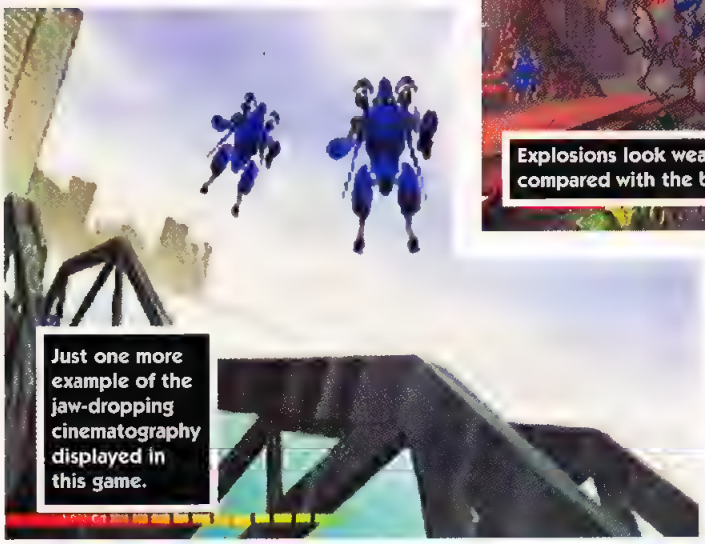


Huge alien tentacles approach Earth in this cool intro sequence.



The Statue of Liberty is buzzed by insane alien fighter pilots. All you have to do is shoot them out of the sky. And well, that's pretty much it. Shoot, shoot and then shoot some more.

Explosions look weak compared with the backdrops.



Just one more example of the jaw-dropping cinematography displayed in this game.

Gameplay is fun, but definitely limited and repetitive. It looks great though.

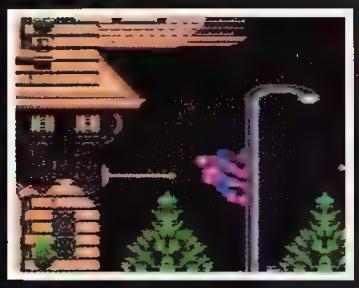
FMV Shooter
FMV Cartridge required
Trackball support
CD-i Gun compatible

Philips (310) 444-6500
Machine: Philips CD-i
Price: $60
Available: Now

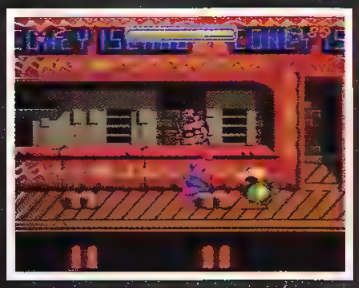
Graphics	9
Sound	7
Playability	6

ULTIMATE GAMER FINAL RATING **6**

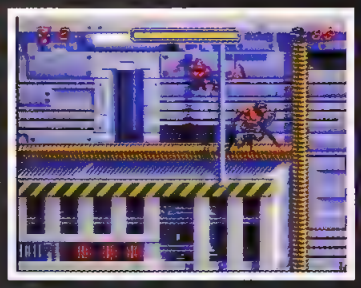
SPIDER-MAN ANIMATED • ACCLAIM • GENESIS



See Spidey perch on a pole.



Things can get pretty hairy on Coney Island.

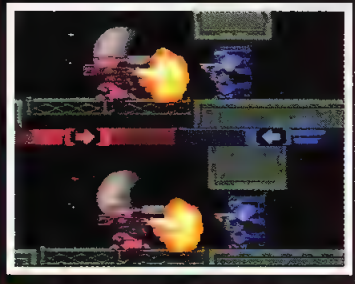


Battle through multiple levels of evil minions.

Graphics	7
Sound	7
Playability	6

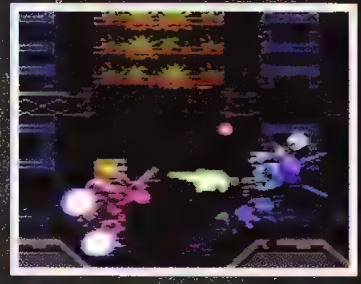
ULTIMATE GAMER FINAL RATING **7**

METAL WARRIORS • KONAMI • SNES



Battle head-to-head with another mech.

Choose Prometheus for some heavy artillery.

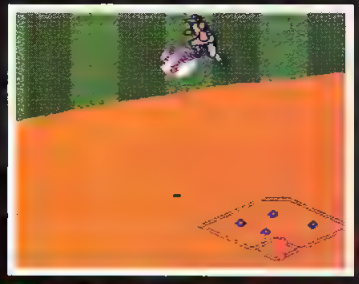


Fire fights in METAL WARRIORS are great.

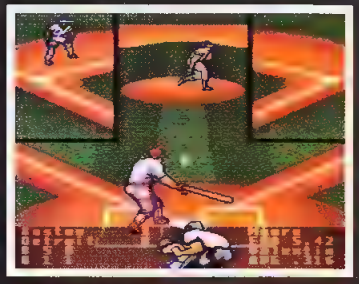
Graphics	8
Sound	7
Playability	8

ULTIMATE GAMER FINAL RATING **8**

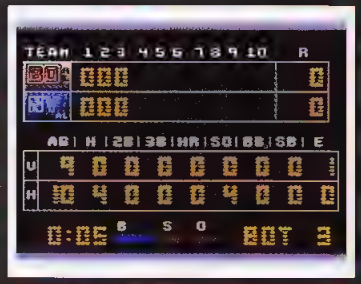
SUPER R.B.I. BASEBALL • TIME WARNER • SNES



Try and track down a Mo Vaughn blast.



What's so super about these graphics?

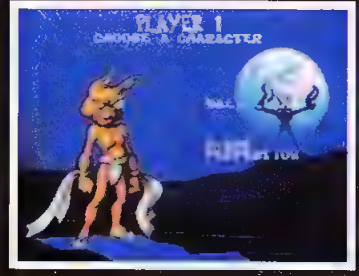


Check some stats between innings.

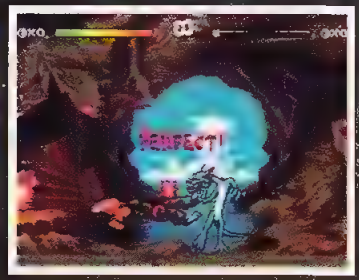
Graphics	5
Sound	7
Playability	7

ULTIMATE GAMER FINAL RATING **7**

BRUTAL • GAMETEK • GENESIS 32X



In this version, you can play as master Llama.



Watch Kung Poe turn into a monster and go kick butt.

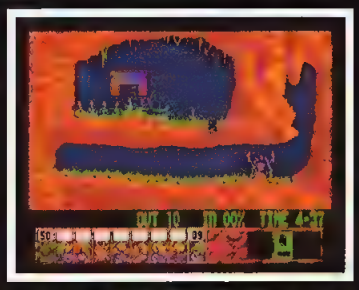
Faster reaction time than the CD version.

Graphics	8
Sound	8
Playability	8

ULTIMATE GAMER FINAL RATING **8**

LEMMINGS • PHILLIPS • CD-I

They're cute, they're cuddly, they're suicidal!



Use the miner lemming to dig a passage.

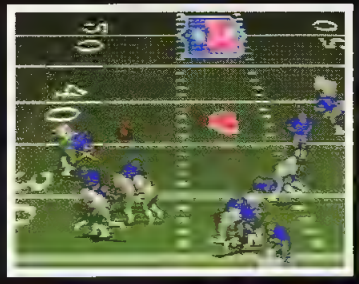
Don't let time expire or your lemmings will explode.

Graphics	6
Sound	5
Playability	8

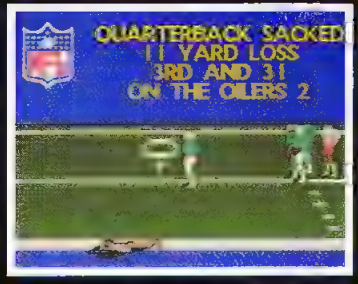
ULTIMATE GAMER FINAL RATING **7**

TROY AIKMAN FOOTBALL• WILLIAMS • JAGUAR

You can either coach your team or take control of the players.



Drop back for the big pass.

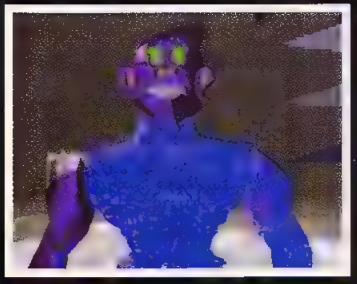


Don't hold onto the ball too long or you'll get crushed.

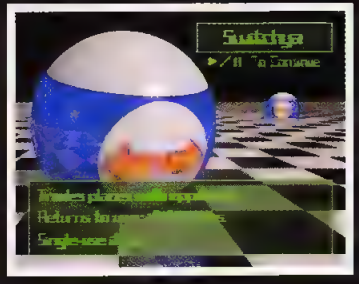
Graphics	7
Sound	7
Playability	7

ULTIMATE GAMER FINAL RATING **7**

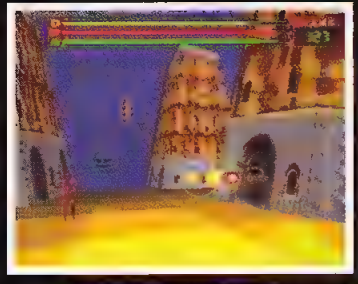
IMMERCENARY • ELECTRONIC ARTS• 3DO



Need some info? Talk to the locals.



Collect balls for extra powers.



It takes fast reflexes and strategy to survive this game.

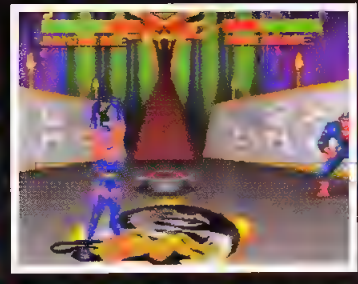
Graphics	9
Sound	8
Playability	9

ULTIMATE GAMER FINAL RATING **9**

DOUBLE DRAGON V• WILLIAMS • JAGUAR

These characters are all wimps!

Where are the special moves in this game?

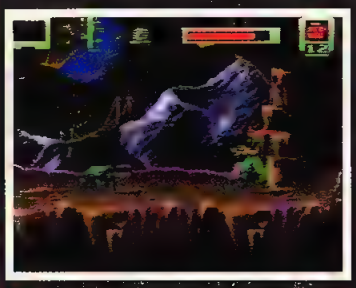


Play against a friend or go into tournament mode.

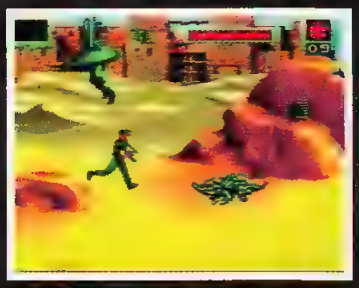
Graphics	6
Sound	6
Playability	4

ULTIMATE GAMER FINAL RATING **5**

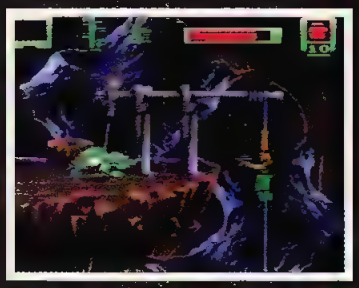
STARGATE • ACCLAIM • SUPER NES



The game veers wildly from the plot of the movie.



Although detailed, the main sprite walks like a loony.

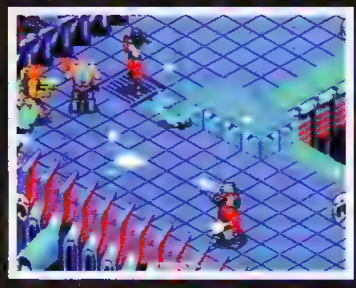


This has more than a little in common with the CONTRA games.

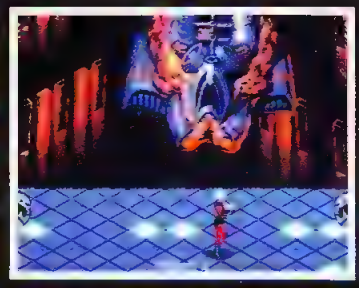
Graphics	7
Sound	7
Playability	7

ULTIMATE GAMER FINAL RATING **7**

SKELETON KREW • CORE DESIGN• GENESIS



Isometric 3-D graphics are an old technique, but used well here.



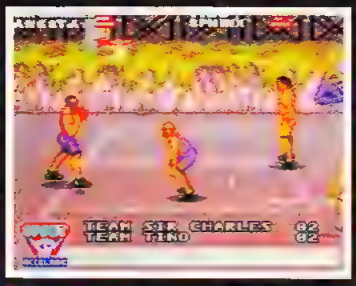
Boss monsters are difficult and elaborate in the extreme.

Surfaces like this swamp play a big part in the gameplay.

Graphics	8
Sound	7
Playability	8

ULTIMATE GAMER FINAL RATING **8**

SHUT UP AND JAM 2 • ACCOLADE • GENESIS



Sir Charles prepares to gouge out the eyes of his opponent.

Slam dunking has become a National pastime these days.

Pick your player. Not that it makes a great deal of difference.

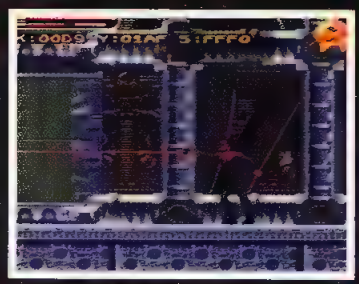
Graphics	5
Sound	7
Playability	6

ULTIMATE GAMER FINAL RATING **6**

DEEP SPACE NINE • PLAYMATES • SNES

Fans of the show may be excited by DEEP SPACE NINE. Whoa.

DEEP SPACE NINE: Dull show, dull game. Run, run away.

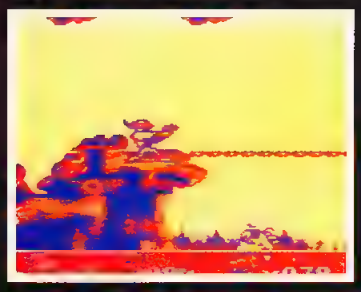


The captain gives a lesson with his super-duper laser pointer.

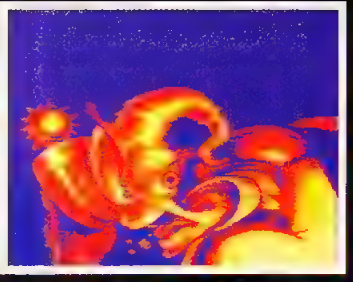
Graphics	6
Sound	6
Playability	4

ULTIMATE GAMER FINAL RATING **5**

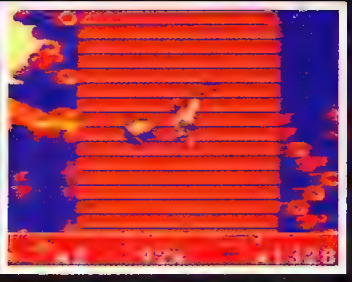
EARTHWORM JIM • PLAYMATES • GAME BOY



Jim looks just as good on Game Boy as he does on Genesis!



Our hero. Worm of the people. Psychopathic killer.



All the features from the original are here on the Game Boy.

Graphics	9
Sound	8
Playability	9

ULTIMATE GAMER FINAL RATING: 9

TWIN GODDESSES • POLYGRAM • PLAYSTATION

The shop sequence precedes every game. Buy some magic.

STREET FIGHTER-style moves work with most characters.

The huge sprites are impressive, but goofy-looking.

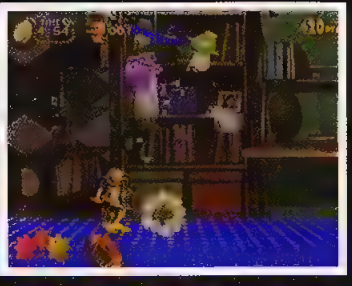
Graphics	5
Sound	5
Playability	4

ULTIMATE GAMER FINAL RATING: 4

CLOCKWORK KNIGHT • SEGA • SATURN

Our hero enters a fencing competition with his love rival.

A creepy end-of-level boss does his stuff, his blue head obscured.



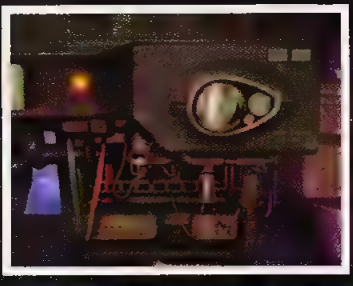
The backgrounds are texture-mapped 3-D geometry.

Graphics	9
Sound	8
Playability	7

ULTIMATE GAMER FINAL RATING: 8

DAEDALUS ENCOUNTER • VIRGIN • PC CD ROM

One of the alien beasts you'll encounter during the game.



A weird probe droid with a spooky human brain.

It's almost worth buying the game to see Tia Carrere.

Graphics	10
Sound	9
Playability	8

ULTIMATE GAMER FINAL RATING: 9

TACTICAL

STRATEGIES • CHEATS • CODES

We here at **Ultimate Gamer** understand that even the best of players may have a bad day every now and then. Since we wouldn't want any unnecessary mass-murders taking place, we feel it's our duty to arm you with nothing but the very best tips and codes available. Depend on **Tactical** every month for an easy solution to your gaming problems.

SEGA CD

BATMAN RETURNS

• *Stage Select*

Select "Options" from the title screen. Change the Game Type to "Platform Only." Enter the following code on the control panel by holding **Left** on the control pad and pressing **B** while Batman's finger is over each number in this order: **1, 7, 1, 6, 7.** Note that by holding **Left** and pressing **B** you don't change the status of that item on the screen, but you do enter the number. You should hear a louder beep when you enter the last number to indicate that the stage-select code is in place.

Next, set up the game options any way you like, then point to the number of the stage you wish to start at. Hold **Left** and press **B** to start at that stage. Note that choosing 7 as your starting stage will send you back to the title screen, since each of the three game types consists of five stages plus an ending sequence.

• *Stage Skip*

Set the Game Type to "Driving Only," then hold **Left** and press **B** at each of the following numbers: **1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1.** You should hear a beep confirming the code. Once that sequence has been performed, start the game, and you'll find that you can skip stages at any time by pressing the **C** button while the game is paused.

BRUTAL

• *Boss Code*

At the title screen, enter the code **Up, Down, A, B, C, C, B, A, Down, Up.** Now you can choose Karate Croc at the "Choose a Character" screen. I hope that has fulfilled you in some way. I know it has enriched my life massively. I now have a new respect for furry animals and cuddly toys.

COBRA COMMAND

• *Training Mode*

Press **START** at the title screen. When you see the words "Game Start" and "Config Mode," press **Up, Down, Left** and **Right.** You'll hear a short explosion sound. Next, go to the "Config Mode" menu and you'll find a new difficulty setting, "Training." In the Training mode, you can continue at the point you had reached when you were killed instead of being sent back to the beginning of the stage.

• *Stage Select/Stage Skip*

When you see the words "Game Start" and "Config Mode," press **Up, Down, Left, Right, Right, Up.** You should hear two explosions during this sequence.

When you reach the screen that says "New York—Stage 1," you can press **Right** or **Left** on the D-pad to change your starting level. Once the action starts, you can skip to the end of the current stage simply by pressing **START.** Press **START** in the final stage, and you'll skip to the ending credits.

• *Screen Garbage*

With the stage-select code in place, pressing **A, B** and **C** at the same time will give you a screenful of hexadecimal code that overlays the action.

FIFA INTERNATIONAL SOCCER

• *Super Cheats*

Each of these codes works at the Game Options menu at the start of the game. The cheats will appear as menu items on the Game Options screen.

• *Invisible Walls:* Press **C** three times, **B, A** three times, **B.** Now the ball bounces back onto the field if kicked over a line.

• *Curve Ball:* Press **B, A, C, B, C** twice. Any ball you kick into the air can be severely curved with the control pad.

• *Crazy Ball:* Press **C, A, B, C** twice, **B, A, C.** The ball bounces around within a new set of random parameters.

• *Dream Team:* Press **A** twice, **B** twice, **C** twice, **A** twice. All the player's attributes are turned up, rendering the team unbeatable.

• *Super Power:* Press **B, A, B** eight times. Your players gain 25% more kicking power on kicks, passes and shots.

• *Super Goalie:* Press **A** five times, **B** five times. Your goalie will gain increased speed and ability.

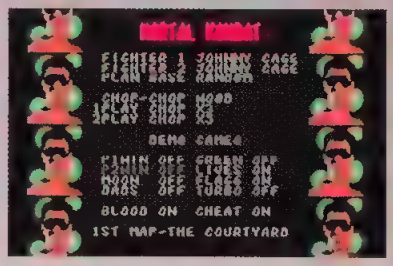
• *Super Offense:* press **A** five times, **B, C.** Your team's offensive skills will suddenly be improved measurably.

• *Super Defense:* Press **B** five times, **C, B.** Your team's defensive skills are improved measurably.

FINAL FIGHT CD

• *Rapid-Fire Mode*

Highlight the word "EXIT" at the bottom of the option menu. Press and hold **A, B** and **Right,** and press **START** while continuing to hold down those buttons. Begin the game. All action buttons, even the ones on a standard controller, have been equipped with rapid-fire to attack your enemies with repeated punches and throws.



MORTAL KOMBAT

• *DULLARD Code*

Those Mortal Kombat fellows have been going pretty nuts and this has to be the most cheat-packed game we've ever seen. It also has some pretty amusing little touches, like the "Feargality" actually Feargus McGovern, the boss of Probe Software. But, back to the point once more. At the Start/Options menu, press **Down, Up, Left, Left, A, Right, Down.** A new menu selection will appear called "Cheat Enabled." To utilise this properly, you should make careful note of the effects listed below.

• *P1WIN/P2WIN* (a.k.a. *FLAG0/FLAG1*): Player 1 and/or Player 2 starts each round in "Danger" mode, during which his character will die after taking one hit.

• *MOON* (a.k.a. *FLAG2*): Guarantees a silhouette in front of the moon on the Pit stage.

• *DADS* (formerly *FLAG3*): Changes the fighters' names.

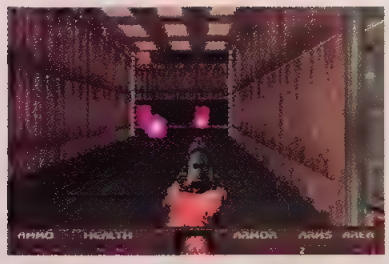
• *GREEN* (a.k.a. *FLAG4*): Gives you Reptile hints before every battle.

• *LIVES* (a.k.a. *FLAG5*): Gives you infinite credits.

• *FLAG6* (same as Genesis): The computer does fatalities.

• *TURBO* (Formerly *FLAG7*): Lets you play the game in Turbo mode.

JAGUAR



DOOM

• *God Mode*

Start a game, press **PAUSE**, hold down the **STAR** (✱) key, and unpause the game. The eyes of your character will turn yellow indicating you are invincible to all attacks.

• *Total Power-Up Charge*

Start a game, press **PAUSE**, hold down the POUND (#) key, and unpause the game. You now have full health, armor, weapons, ammo, and keys.

• *Level Warps*

To warp to any level, hit **PAUSE** and enter the following codes:

Area 1:	Hold **C+1** and Unpause
Area 2:	Hold **C+2** and Unpause
Area 3:	Hold **C+3** and Unpause
Area 4:	Hold **C+4** and Unpause
Area 5:	Hold **C+5** and Unpause
Area 6:	Hold **C+6** and Unpause
Area 7:	Hold **C+7** and Unpause
Area 8:	Hold **C+8** and Unpause
Area 9:	Hold **C+9** and Unpause
Area 10:	Hold **A** and Unpause
Area 11:	Hold **A+1** and Unpause
Area 12:	Hold **A+2** and Unpause
Area 13:	Hold **A+3** and Unpause
Area 14:	Hold **A+4** and Unpause
Area 15:	Hold **A+5** and Unpause
Area 16:	Hold **A+6** and Unpause
Area 17:	Hold **A+7** and Unpause
Area 18:	Hold **A+8** and Unpause
Area 19:	Hold **A+9** and Unpause
Area 20:	Hold **B** and Unpause
Area 21:	Hold **B+1** and Unpause
Area 22:	Hold **B+2** and Unpause
Area 23:	Hold **B+3** and Unpause
Area 24:	Hold **B+4** and Unpause

TEMPEST 2000

• *Level Skip*

This trick works in all of the solo Tempest modes: Traditional Tempest, Tempest Plus and Tempest 2000. At the Game Selection menu, choose which version of the game you want to play by placing the cursor next to the correct option. Start the game by holding down **1**, **4**, **7** and ✱ on the numeric keypad and pressing **A**. You will hear a slowed down version of the "Excellent" menu prompt. Once the code is in place, you can skip a level at any time during the game by pressing the **OPTION** button.

• *Bonus Stage Warp*

Choose the *Tempest 2000* mode at the Game Selection menu and enable the cheat as described above. Start the game with the cheat in place as before, but before you press **OPTION**, hit the **3** and **6** keys simultaneously on the numeric keypad. The words "Warp Enabled" will appear on the screen. Press **OPTION** and you will warp to the next between-round bonus level. And that, it would appear is that. Now all you have to do is play the game properly in the first place, and then you wouldn't have to cheat. How we dream of a Utopian future where people work for high scores, rather than resort to petty cheating.

WOLFENSTEIN 3-D

• *Music Test*

Press the **#** key on the control pad while the sphere is rotating before the title screen. *Level*

• *Select*

Put the star next to "New Game" at the main menu screen and hold the **1**, **3**, **7** and **9** buttons on the control pad. The level select menu should appear. Now you can choose any of the game's 30 levels, including the two bonus stages in Missions Three and Six.

• *Invincibility*

Enter **4**, **6**, **6**, **8** to become invincible. You'll see a gold band appear around B.J.'s on-screen health head. Repeat this code to turn it off.

• *Finish and Restart Level*

Type **4**, **6**, **9**, **6** to end the current level and start at the beginning again.

• *Level Skip*

Type **4**, **7**, **8**, **6** to finish the level you are on and skip to the next.

• *Debug*

Type **4**, **8**, **8**, **7** to see the programmers' debugging coordinates on the screen. Type the code again to turn them off.

• *Full Weapons, Ammo, and Keys*

Type **4**, **9**, **9**, **6** and you will get the big guns, ammo, and keys.

3DO

GUARDIAN WAR

• *Cheat Menu*

Start a new game, or load a saved game. When the menu screen (with various locations and flapping flags) appears, press the **L**, **R**, and **C** buttons one after another. (The flags will stop flapping.) Press **Up**, **Down**, **Left**, **Right** and a Japanese-text menu appears. The options, from top to bottom, are:

• **Load Game:** Load a saved game or start a new game.

• **Equip:** Examine and equip characters, similar to the Equipment option on the regular menu.

• **Shop:** Enter a shop where you can buy and sell EVERY item, piece of equipment and body in the game.

• **Gems+10000:** Increases your Gem total by 10,000. Can be used repeatedly.

• **No Battles:** Prevents enemies from attacking you, and vice-versa. And it can also be toggled on and off.

• **Coordinates:** Shows you X and Y coordinates of your location when in a location, and also your "coordinates" on the main map. Can be toggled on and off.

• **Free Movement:** Allows you to walk to (almost) any location on the map without clearing previous locations of enemies. Can be toggled on and off.

• **All Attacks:** Allows you to use all weapon and magic attacks during battle by choosing from a menu. Can be toggled on and off.

• **God Mode:** Prevents you from losing any HP or MP during battle. Can be toggled on and off.

• **Map Detail:** Gives you significantly increased detail when examining the map of a location.

• **???:** Unknown.

• **???:** Unknown.

• **Basic +1**: Increases the basic level of the currently selected Golem by 1.

• **Class +1:** Increases the class level of the currently selected body or sub-body by 1.

THE HORDE

• *Cheat Codes*

The cheat mode works by spelling out words with the 3DO controller. There are six letters: U (**Up** on the control pad), D (**Down**), L (**Left**), R (**Right**), O (Button **A**) and T (Button **B**).

To enter the cheat mode, start the game, then hold **Up** on the control pad and hold down the **A** and **B** button before pausing the game. While paused, spell out one of the following words, then unpause to activate the cheat.

DOLLDOOR (**Down**, **A**, **Left**, **Left**, **Down**, **A**, **A**, **Right**): You immediately finish the current habitat and return to the castle.

LOOTLORD (**Left**, **A**, **A**, **B**, **Left**, **A**, **Right**, **Down**): You immediately receive 30,000 Crowns, the maximum amount of money you can have in the game.

LOUDTOOT (**Left**, **A**, **Up**, **Down**, **B**, **A**, **A**, **B**): The entire map of the current habitat is revealed.

ODDROD (**A**, **Down**, **Down**, **Right**, **A**, **Down**): Allows you to continue playing even if the entire village is destroyed.

ROLLOUT (**Right**, **A**, **Left**, **Left**, **A**, **Up**, **B**): Allows you to watch all of the full-motion video sequences in the game, one after another. Press any button on the controller to skip the current scene and watch the next.

TROLLDROOL (**B**, **Right**, **A**, **Left**, **Left**, **Down**, **Right**, **A**, **A**, **Left**): All items and weapons in the game become available for purchase.

TROT (**B**, **Right**, **A**, **B**): Allows Chauncey to run around the map twice as fast as normal. If

Chauncey uses the Boots of Boogie in combination with this cheat, he runs around the map FOUR times as fast.

TURDODOR (**B, Up, Right, Down, A, Down, A, Right**): Chauncey becomes totally invulnerable to damage.

JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL

• *Giant and Midget Refs*

While playing, pause the game and press **Right, Down, Left, Up, Right, Down**. (You'll hear the referee's whistle blow.) Continue the game to view the ref as a giant.

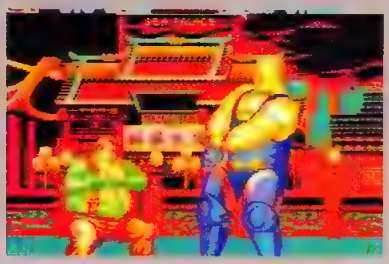
To make the referee small, pause the game and press **Left, Down, Right, Up, Left, Down, Right**. (You'll hear the referee's whistle blow.) Continue the game to view the ref as a midget.

NEO•GEO

CROSSED SWORDS

• *Continue with Items*

When your swordsman is killed in the one-player game, don't continue the game on Controller 1. Instead, plug in Controller 2 and press **START**. Continuing as player two, you'll notice that you still have all of the items and gold that you had as player one. If you keep switching back and forth between the two controllers, you can continue as many times as you wish.



FATAL FURY SPECIAL

• *Secret Character!*

To play against Ryo Sakazaki from *Art of Fighting* in *Fatal Fury Special*, you have to beat the game at any difficulty level without losing a single round. (If you have a Neo•Geo Memory Card then it's really easy: If you lose a round, simply lose the battle and continue with the Memory Card. This way, your perfect record will remain intact.)

• *Play As Ryo Sakazaki*

To choose the secret character as your fighter in a two-player game, you must have the Memory Card and be able to fight Ryo as described above—and beat him. Once you've defeated Ryo, start a new game and choose the saved game in the Memory Card to fight Ryo again. This time you must lose the battle with Ryo; then, when the "Continue" countdown runs out and a fighting demo sequence begins, press **Up, Left, Down, Right, Up, A, Up, Right, Down, Left, Up, C** on Controller 1. You'll hear Ryo's familiar taunt, "Oobida–oobida!" to indicate that the code is in place.

Start the game, and you'll find a new menu at the title screen. Be sure to choose the two-player game. At the "**Fighter Selection Screen**" you'll see that both players can now choose to fight as Ryo. Here are Ryo's secret moves!

Fireball: ↓↘→+**A** or **C**
Super Uppercut: →↓↘+**A** or **C**
Fire Kick: ↙↗+**B** or **D**
Fists of Fury: Press **C** repeatedly
Mega Fireball: →←↙↓↘→+**C**
Desperation Attack: ↓↙←↙→+**B+D** simultaneously (Ryo's energy meter must be almost empty to do this move.)

Sound Test

Pause the game and press **A, B, C, D, A**. Now you can hear all of the different grunts, groans and music from the game.

WORLD HEROES

• *Extra Fireball Power*

Everyone knows that the familiar fighting-game "fireball" motion (↓↘→+**A**) will cause Hanzo or Fuuma to throw stars at their opponents. If you perform the joystick motion *twice* before pressing the **A** button, the character will throw two stars at the same time.

ARCADE

CRUISIN' USA

• *Extra Cars*

When you reach the garage where you can choose your car, press down on the **Cruisin' View 2** button. You'll find that you can now choose three new vehicles to drive: a School Bus, a Police Car and a Jeep.

DAYTONA USA

• *Free Credits*

Look for the slot machine above the road on the **Beginner Track**. As you go around the track, you'll notice that you can stop the wheels of the slot machine by pressing the **START** button. Each time you push the button, you can stop one of the wheels on the machine. If you stop all of the wheels and hit the jackpot, you can win free credits to continue your game.

NBA JAM TOURNAMENT EDITION

• *Special Guest Codes*

Kinkead	DIE	1/1
Air Morris	WIL	1/1
Oursler	SNO	1/3
Penacho	MDP	1/13
Rivett	RJR	1/17
Olajuwon	HAK	1/21
Gentile	JPG	1/23
Jarvis	EPJ	1/27
DiVita	SAL	2/1
Mourning	ZO■	2/8
Olivia	LOR	2/20
Boon	EJB	2/22
Simpson	JMS	2/22
Webber	WEB	3/1
Turmell	MJT	3/22
Macika	REM	3/26
Pontarelli	VJB	4/11
Linhoff	JFL	4/16
Wilkins	DOM	4/16
Booty	MVB	4/18
Thomas	ZEK	4/30
Deal	LTD	4/30
Barker	PCB	5/9
Loffredo	ML■	5/25
Green	JDG	5/31
Dillon	JPD	6/3
Newcomer	JRN	6/18
Coleman	DC■	6/21
Liptak	SL■	6/24
Vogel	VOG	6/27
Mednick	CMM	7/2
Heager	JEH	7/13
Malone	KRL	7/24
Skiles	JMS	7/29
Sharpe	ROG	8/1
Carlton	JMC	8/5
Ewing	PAT	8/5
Robinson	ROB	8/6
Martinez	MAM	8/7
Gay	RMG	8/11
Davis	WBD	8/17
Tobias	TOB	8/24
Beran	SAB	8/29
Lasko	AML	8/31
Davies	RJD	9/3
Hey	JWH	9/20
Pippen	PIP	9/25
Forden	DWF	9/28
Petro	GNP	10/8
Hoskins	KER	10/10
Lowes	JML	11/4
Kamm	VLK	11/9
Heitsch	WMN	11/11
Kemp	KMP	11/26
Tsui	JYT	11/28
Brown	DEE	11/29
Granner	CG■	12/4
Goskie	TWG	12/7
Dabelstein	DOZ	12/31

• *Secret Power-ups*

With the exception of the "Team Swap" code, all of these tricks should be performed at the "Tonight's Matchup" screen that appears before the tip-off.

Maximum Power: Hold **Down, TURBO, SHOOT, PASS** and **START** until the game begins.

Quick Hands: Hold **Down** and press the **SHOOT** button five times. After the fifth button press, keep holding **Down** and **SHOOT** until the tip-off.

Baby-Size Players: Hold the joystick in the

Down/Right position and press **TURBO**, **SHOOT**, **PASS**, **TURBO**, **SHOOT**, **PASS**, **TURBO**, **SHOOT**, **PASS**.
Big Head #1: Hold **Up**, **TURBO**, **PASS** and **SHOOT** until the tip-off.
Huge Head: Hold **Up** and **TURBO** and press the **PASS** button five times. On the fifth press, keep holding **Up**, **TURBO** and **PASS** until the tip-off.
Tournament Mode: Hold **Right** and hold down the **TURBO**, **SHOOT** and **PASS** buttons until the tip-off.
Shot Percentage Indicator: Rotate the joystick 360° and hit the **TURBO**, **SHOOT** and **PASS** buttons simultaneously seven times.
Power-Up Goal-tending: Press any button (or combination of buttons) 24 times. Note: You must finish pressing the buttons before the screen starts to shrink.
Team Swap: At the "Halftime Substitution" screen, hold the joystick to the **Right** and hold the **PASS** button until the words "TEAM SWAP ENABLED" appear. Now you can use the **PASS** button to switch to a different team; use the **TURBO** button to swap players and press **SHOOT** to enter your selection.

PRIMAL RAGE

• *Bowling*
To bowl, both players must choose the character Armadon. Do the **Spinning Death** move (hold buttons **1+4** and move the joystick **Away**, **Toward**, **Down**) and collide in mid-spin **three times in a row**. A bowling game will pop up, with the humans as pins! Move the joystick to control the path of Armadon.
• *Volleyball*
To play volleyball, you must be on the Cove stage (the beach with the temples on the sides). When a human rushes out after a combo, swat them into the air. You and your opponent must then hit the human back and forth (at least five or six volleys). Keep batting the little guy around until a volleyball net pops up out of the ground, complete with a referee on a tall chair!
• *Falling Cows?*
One player must choose the character Chaos. When you reach the Ruins stage (with the buildings in the background), set-up a "Sudden Death" situation by having one character win the first match and letting the other character win the next one. Then, you need to let the timer run down to zero without having either player hit the other.
When the timer runs down until it is almost zero in the Sudden Death mode, lay a Fart of Fury into the air using Chaos (hold buttons **2+3** and move the joystick **Down**, **Toward**, **Up**, **Away**). The timer should be between the 1 and 2 "seconds left" mark when you let it rip. If your timing is perfect and the fart is still in the air when the timer expires, you'll notice that cows fall from the sky instead of the usual shower of bricks.

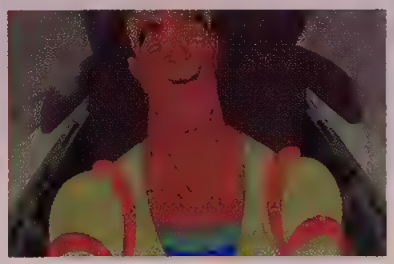
SUPER STREET FIGHTER II TURBO

• *Play As Akuma*
At the character-select screen, highlight Ryu for four seconds, then T. Hawk for four seconds, then Guile for four seconds, then Cammy for four seconds, then Guile again for four seconds, then highlight Ryu again for four seconds, then hold down **all three Punch buttons** and the **START** button. If your timing is right, you'll see a mysterious silhouette on the match-up screen. You're playing as Akuma.

CD-i

THE 7TH GUEST

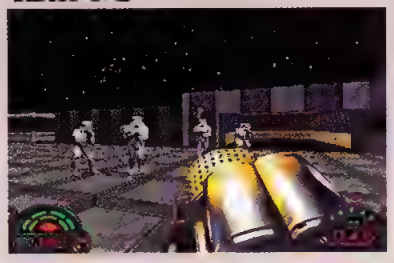
• *Room Select Map*
Go to the **Save/Restart** Ouija board and go into the Save password screen. Pick any number, enter the password **BADGER** and press **OK**. You will return back to the **Save/Restart** menu, but you should notice that the four corners of the board are now "hot." This means that the cursor changes into the teeth icon when you move it onto one of the corners. Press any button while you are on one of the corners and you will suddenly find the *7th Guest* room map.



SPACE ACE

• *Level Select Menu*
At the Continue screen that comes up after you have lost the game, put the cursor against the left side of the screen and press **Button 2 (..)** four times. Then put the cursor on the right side of the screen and press **Button 2** three times. Finally, go back to the left side of the continue board and press **Button 2** one more time. You've found the level-select cheat map. Put the cursor on any one of the levels and you'll be warped to that level.

IBM PC



DARK FORCES

Any of the following codes can be entered during normal gameplay:
LAIMLAME: Makes you invincible.
LAREDLITE: Freezes enemies in their tracks.
LAPOSTAL: Supplies you with all weapons and full ammo, also restoring your health, shielding and battery.
LACDS: Press TAB to bring up automap, then use this code to show enemy locations and to help locate secret areas. Repeated usage toggles the code's various details settings.
LAPOGO: Eliminates stormtroopers' height advantage.
LARANDY: Supercharges your weapons.
LADATA: Displays coordinates.
LABUG: Allows for close-up magnification of objects.
The remaining codes select specific missions:
LASECBASE: Mission I
LATALAY: Mission II
LASEWERS: Mission III
LATESTBASE: Mission IV
LAGROMAS: Mission V
LADETENTION: Mission VI
LARAMSHED: Mission VII
LAROBOTICS: Mission VIII
LANARSHADA: Mission IX
LAJABSHIP: Mission X
LAIMPCITY: Mission XI
LAFUELSTAT: Mission XII
LAEXECUTOR: Mission XIII
LAARC: Mission XIV

To play *Dark Forces* entirely off the hard disk: Perform the custom full-install of approximately seventy megabytes, setting the sound card and other preferences. Once all the necessary files have been installed, copy the CD.ID file found in *Dark Forces*' root directory to the root directory of the hard disk (most likely the C:\ prompt).

RISE OF THE TRIAD

This is one of the better shooters available for the PC, but it is very tough to finish, hence these nice cheats.
While playing the game, type **\ECC** to **E**nable **C**heat **C**ode.
Type **\WWW**, (**W**oundless **W**ith **W**eapons) to become invincible.
Type **\GTL** (**G**o **T**o any **L**evel) to display a list of all the levels.
Type in **\MER** (**Mer**cury) to fly.
Type in **\BUM** to open all doors.
When booting up the game, type **ROTT DOPEFISH** to hear belching instead of music when each level is installed.

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FLASHBACK

Every month, we step into the Ultimate Gamer Time Machine and relive those early days of gaming. This month, the focus is on handhelds and the impact they have made on the gaming industry.

PORTABLE GAME CRAZY

Above: Mattel's debut handheld, Missile Attack

Thinking back to my early school days, one thing that really stands out (other than the embarrassment of constantly having to untuck my T-shirt to go up to the blackboard) is the fact that just about everyone and their brother carried around handheld, battery-operated games in some form or another. Of course, I wasn't exempt from this trend, and took full advantage of my "Study Halls" by playing plenty of Mattel Electronics Football. This was a great time-killer until either the batteries went dead or the teacher confiscated it. Because none of these games had a "mute" switch, I remember covering the little speaker with my untucked t-shirt in order to muffle the sound and not get caught by that evil wench, Mrs. Jerwolski. Since I considered school to be more of an interruption of my game-playing activities than a necessary learning procedure anyway, playing portables was a great way to get through the day until I could make it home to my 2600. Man, whatever happened to the simple life?

It started in 1977, when Mattel Electronics, who would later crown themselves as the undisputed Kings of handhelds, released their first game, **Missile Attack**. It was the world's first use of L.E.D. (Light Emitting Diode) technology in a portable game. The application of multiple rows of L.E.D.'s was crude, but worked perfectly to give the illusion of a player moving, a rocket launching, etc., and became a huge success. In March of 1978, Mattel debuted their now infamous 9-volt battery sports lineup consisting of Football, Hockey and Basketball, all of which flew off retail shelves. Mattel never could fill all of the orders it received that year. One very interesting bit of Mattel trivia: even though it was hot, Electronic Football designer Richard Chong was not into sports, and as a result, created the game with only a 90-yard field. But it was discovered too late; production was already under way. Chong's career was untarnished, however; he went on to design more games, including some for Mattel's own Intellivision system.

In its first year alone, Mattel sold a remarkable 1.8 million units

Above: One of Coleco's first entries into the portable wars, Head-to-Head Baseball

Other companies such as Coleco, Tomytronics, Kenner, and Parker Brothers watched what Mattel was doing and decided to jump on the bandwagon with their own line of portable games.

By 1980, the portable L.E.D. thing was wearing thin. Arcade and home video games were fast becoming more and more technologically advanced (okay, so they sucked by today's standards), with their detailed, full color graphics. Handheld game companies were looking for a way to translate some of that excitement to battery-operated handhelds. Since Lynx and Game Gear technology were merely a dream and years away from being developed, the answer was to use Vacuum Fluorescent display screens. Game images were displayed in small, pre-shaped gas-filled areas, giving off a colorful glow. Suddenly, several colors could now be displayed simultaneously. Coleco introduced colorful, tabletop versions of **Galaxian**, **Donkey Kong**, **Frogger**, **Zaxxon** and **Pac Man**. Retailing from between $50 and $80, these games were extremely popular for a quite a while.

Above: Nintendo's Game & Watch

Between 1981 and 1983, Nintendo released a popular series of "Game & Watch" handhelds. Titles such as **Bomb Sweeper**, **Zelda** and **Donkey Kong II** featured twin-LCD screens and retailed for around $45. Two separate game screens housed in plastic casings were hinged together, and when folded in half, the Game & Watch units were reduced to the size of a wallet.

Strangely enough, cheap-o, three-day-life-span, LCD handheld games are still being manufactured in the world today. Obviously, low production costs and large profits are the biggest reasons for the continuing use of the LCD format. But frankly, with the amazing advancements portable gaming technology has made in the last ten years, including the Game Boy ,Game Gear and Lynx (each clocking in at between fifty and ninety-nine bucks a pop), who needs those old, crusty L.E.D. or LCD things anyway?

To this day, I can still see that old hag, Mrs. Jerwolski, taking my beloved Mattel Electronics Football game from me just as I was on "1st and Goal". And as I walked past the faculty lounge on my way home, I swear I heard the bleeping and blooping of that damned game.

—Jim Loftus

Left: Coleco's highly successful Table-top arcade series featured Fluorescent Vacuum Display technology

For more information on handheld electronic games and video game systems, contact Bruce Greenberg at: Bruce Greenberg, Toytronics Inc., 1308 N.E. 134th St. Suite D, Vancouver, Washington 98685 FAX: (206) 576-1984.

THE ULTIMATE SURVEY

WIN SOMETHING FOR FREE! Get your hands on a limited edition ULTIMATE GAMER coffee mug. 25 lucky winners will be selected at random to receive a manly dark blue mug with the ULTIMATE GAMER logo embossed in gold. It's neat and will hold any liquid beverage. Cut this out, fold it up and send it off.

1. The following items appeared in this issue of ULTIMATE GAMER. We'd like to know roughly how interesting you found each piece to be, on a scale of 3 (very interesting) to 0 (not at all interesting).
_ Plugged In
_ News
_ Incoming
_ Static
_ Sega Saturn Sports feature
_ Hardware features
_ Previews
_ Reviews
_ Micro Reviews
_ Tactical
_ Flashback

2. What was the best thing about this issue of ULTIMATE GAMER?
_____
_____
_____

3. What was the worst thing about this issue of ULTIMATE GAMER?
_____
_____
_____

4. Roughly how many people, apart from yourself, are likely to read this copy of the magazine?
_____ people

5. On average, about how much of ULTIMATE GAMER do you read or look at (excluding advertisements)?
1❒ Less than a quarter
2❒ About a quarter to a half
3❒ About half to three quarters
4❒ More than three quarters
5❒ Cover to cover

6. What will you do with this copy of ULTIMATE GAMER once you've finished reading it?
1❒ Keep it for reference
2❒ Pass it on to someone else
3❒ Throw it away

7. Which other computer magazines do you read regularly? Please list up to 5 in order of preference.
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

8. Please rate ULTIMATE GAMER 1 to 10 with 10 being excellent.
_____ /10

9. If ULTIMATE GAMER is not your favorite computer or video games magazine, please list the titles you prefer and rate them out of 10 with 10 being excellent.
_____ /10
_____ /10
_____ /10

13. Do you use a personal computer? Check all that apply.
1❒ IBM compatible PC
2❒ IBM compatible PC laptop
3❒ Mac
4❒ Mac laptop
5❒ CD ROM drive

14. Do you currently use on-line service or have direct access to the Internet?
1❒ Yes 2❒ No

15. If no, do you intend to go on-line in the next six months?
1❒ Yes 2❒ No

16. If yes, which on-line service(s) do you intend to use?
1❒ Direct Internet access
2❒ America On-line
3❒ Compuserve
4❒ Delphi
5❒ Genie
6❒ Imagination Network
7❒ Prodigy
8❒ MPG-Net
9❒ Novalink
10❒ e-world
11❒ Other (specify)

17. How many years have you been playing video games?
_____ years

18. Which system(s) do you currently own?
1❒ 3DO
2❒ Atari Jaguar
3❒ Atari Lynx
4❒ CD-i
5❒ Game Boy
6❒ Game Gear
7❒ Neo Geo
8❒ Nintendo (8-bit)
9❒ Sega Genesis
10❒ Sega Neptune
11❒ Sega CD
12❒ Sega Genesis 32X
13❒ Sega CD 32X
14❒ Sega Saturn
15❒ Sony Playstation (PS-X)
16❒ Super Nintendo
17❒ Ultra 64

19. How many hours a week do you play video games? _____ hours

20. What types of games do you have?

Adventure	1❒
Arcade game	2❒
Fighters	3❒
Flight sims	4❒
Puzzle	5❒
RPGs	6❒
Sport sims	7❒
Strategy	8❒
Shooters	9❒

21. Which types of software do you intend to buy or upgrade in the next six months?
1❒ Accounting
2❒ Art
3❒ Business/presentation
4❒ CAD
5❒ Communications
6❒ Database
7❒ DTP
8❒ Education
9❒ Home business packages
10❒ Music
11❒ Programming
12❒ Spreadsheets
13❒ Video Tiling
14❒ Word Processing

22. Where do you buy your software and/or hardware? (check all that apply)
1❒ Computer dealer
2❒ Department store
3❒ Discount store
4❒ Electronics store
5❒ Mail order
6❒ Software store
7❒ Toy store

23. Roughly how much have you spent on software (business or leisure) in the last three months? $ ___

24. How often do you buy new software?
1❒ Less than once every 6 months
2❒ Every 3 months to 6 months
3❒ Every 6 weeks to every 3 months
4❒ Every 6 weeks or more often

25. How many CD-ROM games have you purchased in the last six months?
1❒ none
2❒ 1 or 2
3❒ 3-5
4❒ 6-9
5❒ More than 10

26. Do you own a car? (counting joint ownership)
1❒ Yes, bought new
2❒ Yes, bought used
3❒ Don't own a car

27. Which of the following credit cards do you have?
1❒ American Express
2.❒ Discover
3❒ Mastercard
4❒ Visa
5❒ Other (please specify)
_____

28. Do you own or intend to buy any of the following?

	Own	Intend to buy
Big-screen TV	❒	❒
Car telephone or mobile telephone	❒	❒
Custom car stereo	❒	❒
Home stereo system	❒	❒
Laser disk player	❒	❒
Pager	❒	❒
VCR	❒	❒

29. What types of music do you listen to?
1❒ Alternative
2❒ Blues
3❒ Classical
4❒ Heavy Metal
5❒ Jazz
6❒ Pop
7❒ Rap/Hip hop
8❒ Rave/dance/techno
9❒ Reggae
10❒ Rock

30. About how many of the following have you bought in the last year?

	CD	Tape
None	❒	❒
Between 1-3	❒	❒
Between 4-6	❒	❒
More than 7	❒	❒

31. Do you have cable TV or a satellite dish?
1❒ Yes, cable
2❒ Yes, satellite dish
3❒ Neither

32. How many movies on video or disc did you buy last year?
1❒ None 2❒ 1-4
3❒ 5-9 4❒ 10 or more

33. How often do you rent movies?
1❒ Never
2❒ Less than once a month
3❒ Once a month
4❒ Once every other week
5❒ Once a week or more

34. Do you ever drink alcoholic drinks?
1❒ Yes 2❒ No

35. Which of the following liquors do you ever drink? Which do you drink more than 4 servings of a week?

	Ever	4x/week
Bottled beer	❒	❒
Brandy	❒	❒
Canned Beer	❒	❒
Gin	❒	❒
Other spirits/liqueurs	❒	❒
Red wine	❒	❒
Rum	❒	❒
Sparkling wine/ champagne	❒	❒
Vodka	❒	❒
Whiskey/bourbon	❒	❒
White wine	❒	❒

36. Are you...
1❒ Male 2❒ Female

37. How old are you? _____

38. What is your employment status?
1❒ Student
2❒ Not working
3❒ Part-time employed
4❒ Full-time employed

39. Please write in your full occupation, including the type of industry you work in.
occupation _____
industry _____

40. If you are employed, please state your annual income.
1❒ under $20,000
2❒ $20,000-$39,999
3❒ $40,000-$69,999
4❒ $70,000-$99,999
5❒ More than $100,000

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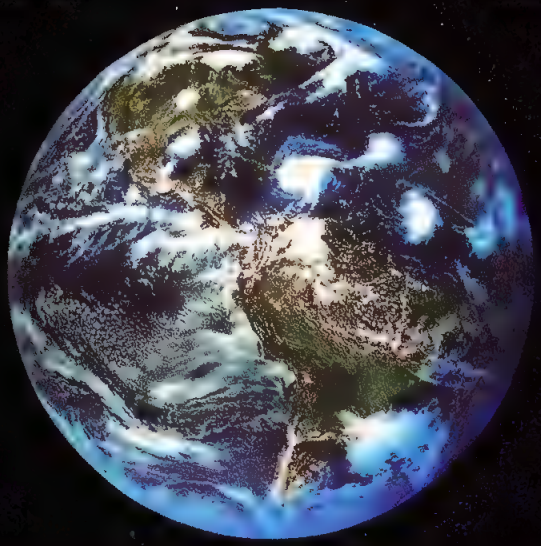

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CD-i

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